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THEODORE E. HOOK, ESQ.

London, published by Richard Bentley, 1839.

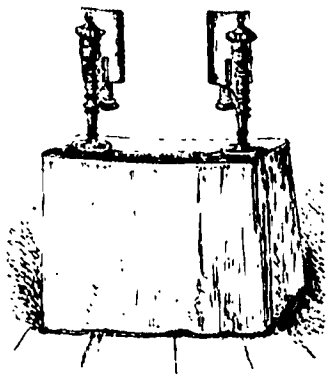
MEMOIRS

OF

CHARLES MATHEWS,

COMEDIAN.

BY MRS. MATHEWS.



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"A man so various, that he seemed to be
Not one, but all mankind's epitome."—DRYDEN.

"Proteus for shape, and mocking-bird for tongue."

VOL. III.

LONDON:
RICHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON STREET,
Publisher in Ordinary to Her Majesty.
1839.

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MEMOIRS

OF

CHARLES MATHEWS.

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Journey to Liverpool.—Incidents on the Road.—Adventure at Dartford.—Letter to Mrs. Mathews.—Reception of Mr. Mathews by his friends at Swansea.—Visit to Mr. and Mrs. Rolls, at Briton Ferry.—Letters to Mrs. Mathews.—Miseries of an Irish Packet-boat.—Unpropitious Performance at Kilkenny.—Mr. Mathews's dog, Fop.

At the close of the first season of his "At Home," at the English Opera House,—the painful disorder in Mr. Mathews's tongue being in a slight degree alleviated,—he again set forth for the provinces, eager to remedy the past by continued exertions throughout the hot weather, when he ought, in reason, to have taken rest and recreation from the severe anxiety and toil of his late engagement. He had, however, to pay the

hard penalty of the mistake he had committed, and he unhesitatingly determined to forego personal ease to "atone," as he said, "to his wife and child for having so rashly given away their rights." His fault was more than expiated by the penance, even had it been of a nature less pardonable,—home and its comfort exchanged for every possible annoyance, and fatigue both of body and mind, were surely punishment enough for much more than is expressed by the words *imprudent precipitancy.*

One of his first letters, after he quitted London, will give some idea of his wearisome pilgrimage, and his persevering and even cheerful endurance of the ills he encountered in his way.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Liverpool, July 13th, 1818.

Here I am safely arrived, after one of the most uncomfortable journeys I have ever encountered, at least from the time I parted with Simpson. Lots of miseries!

The first *pleasing* intelligence we received was in a small town at which we breakfasted on Saturday morning. The ostler, on looking at our horse, observed, that he should almost have thought it was the same horse that had been there the day before. On inquiry, he had seen George; and on the question being put to him as to what time he passed through, &c. he replied, "Ah, sir, the young man had a shocking accident! The horse fell down with him; he rolled over his head, and he has cut the horse's knees sadly." At Stratford we found George affecting the gay,

and flattering himself that we should not examine the horse. Our friend had, however, exaggerated the matter; for though the horse had been down, the injury was very trifling.

We drove him on to Coventry that night; got up early to be ready by the Liverpool mail: at eight it arrived. Sent up to know if there was a place — man returned—yes, sir, one place outside. Sent my portmanteau, gobbled breakfast, — presently saw man return with my portmanteau—smelt a misery. Bookkeeper had just discovered that the place had been promised to a gentleman the night before. No other coach to Liverpool that day; set off on a mere scent of a coach to Birmingham, per gig; tired horse; eighteen miles — drove very fast to get there by twelve: heard there was no coach till four; obliged to make up my mind to go by that. Gobbled up my dinner to be ready — went to the coach-office at four — told London coach was not come in, and the other could not start till half an hour after its arrival; went at five—not arrived; fidgets increased; promised to arrive at nine next morning. Did not believe that; saw two hours fast adding to that—anticipated alarm of Liverpool managers —rehearsal dismissed; at last coach arrived, and at half-past six I was turned off.

I was told the coach was later by two hours than ever known — found it was licensed to carry six inside, and travelled all night. Saw "two women with a child a-piece,"—took outside place — began to rain in ten miles —forced to get in—I made the eighth! One of the ladies was told, "*not on no account* to expose the child to night air,"—five months old—sour milk in a bottle! "One man did *howl* in his sleep," an eccentricity allied, I suspect, to madness. I awoke once, and found the windows close

up. Eight inside—horrible, most horrible! I was stewed; but it rained the whole night, and I was obliged to endure it. I was compelled to have recourse to violent rage and ridicule, wherever I could address the guard, to get any air at all.

So, after all the pains and trouble to myself, horses, Simpson, &c. to avoid travelling all night in the mail, I exchanged it for the *heavy* Liverpool, (a term I shall never forget,) to travel all night with eight people, and that the night before I perform; however, it is all over, thank Heaven! and I am well.

I arrived at one o'clock, rehearsal over of course; but luckily, it is the Manchester company who played with me in the same pieces when I was last there.

A theatrical beggar waited on me before I had been here an hour; and my never-failing friend Ryley shortly afterwards; but in high spirits. He performed here in the Music Hall on Saturday night, and had a good receipt.

I begin to-night—*Goldfinch* and *Buskin.* God bless you and my dear boy. I can spy the house in which he was born from my sitting-room window. Write soon.

C. MATHEWS.

I must tell you two little anecdotes. A sort of military-looking servant came to me at Gravesend,* just before the performance began, and asked me to give him an admission to the theatre. I asked him why I should, and what claim he had upon me? He said *Mrs. Mathews knew him very well, and would do it directly,* if *she was there.* I then asked whether he knew her—and he said, "Very well when she lived with Captain Sillcox of the Tenth. I

* Mr. Mathews had performed at Gravesend, Dover, and Brighton, previously to his going to Liverpool.—A. M.

lived with the Captain then,—before she ran away along with you" !*

Mr. Copeland of the Dover Theatre, saw in my list of properties — four oranges, and two eggs†— and said to Trotter, " What ! does he do tricks with them? I never heard that before. Why I saw no conjuring mentioned in the bills." (!)

The foregoing relation of the military servant's alleged intimacy with me, and the interesting passage in my life, my husband attempted by every assertion to disprove; but the man was not to be undeceived by anything Mr. Mathews could say, and went away very irate at the refusal of a favour claimed on the ground of old acquaintance with the lady of his late master, the wronged Captain Sillcox. This pleasant reminiscence of a caprice imputed to me, reminded us of a ridiculous adventure which occurred about two years after our marriage. It happened, during the summer, that Mr. Mathews and myself paid a visit to Kent, on which occasion we travelled in a low four-wheeled chaise (a present from Mr. Colman, and the first carriage we had ever possessed), to which my husband had suitably attached a little

* This will bring to mind the account in a former page, of two persons of the name of *Mathews*, who travelled as the " celebrated Comedian," and his wife.—A. M.

† Oranges and the yolk of eggs were the only refreshment he resorted to during his performances, or when he found his voice impaired by exertion.—A. M.

pony. The weather, very fine for many previous days, had continued so during the first portion of our drive home; but, just as we reached Dartford, a sudden change took place, which, to my weather-wise husband, appeared of so "threatening" an aspect as to suggest a hasty retreat under the inviting gateway of an inn that stood in the middle of the town. We had scarcely done so, when we found additional shelter requisite from the increasing rain, which soon fell in so violent and constant a manner that we determined to dine, and drive home afterwards, believing that this summer storm would subside as suddenly as it had commenced. Accordingly, our little pony and chaise were confided to the tender mercies of the ostler, and dinner was ordered forthwith. While it was preparing, Mr. Mathews occupied himself by looking out for the "bit of blue," which was to give earnest of a general clearing up, and to encourage us in the prosecution of our journey to town. The clouds, however, were unrelenting, and the rain continued without any seeming chance of abatement. This was unlucky; for I was required to appear in the first piece of that night at the Haymarket, although Mr. Mathews did not act until a later period of the evening. We were totally unprepared for such an alteration of weather. The "Murphy" of that day had connived with the weather-glass (in which my husband

always had implicit faith), to delude us with fair promises. Mr. Mathews had carefully consulted these authorities before he ventured upon an excursion, which was one of great moment to us, since it involved the welfare possibly of the first piece of horseflesh he had ever purchased, not to mention the pretty little carriage, of which we were tenderly careful and exceedingly proud. Notwithstanding his belief that the weather would clear, it however occurred to Mr. Mathews, as a stage-coach drew up to the inn on its way to town, that it would be the surest plan to forward me by it, and to follow himself at leisure for his later duties at the theatre in the evening; for to leave his carriage and cob, cherished novelties as they were, behind him, was a risk not to be thought of. He therefore entreated me to proceed without him in the above manner; to which, though something loath, I at length consented. The waiter was sent to inquire whether a place was vacant, and, to my relief, returned with the intelligence that the coach was full.

The rain still came down violently; and it would have been madness in a person so susceptible of cold as myself, to venture on such a drive in such weather. In this dilemma, Mr. Mathews determined on the only alternative, and ordered a post-chaise to be got ready. The landlord answered this magnificent demand in

person :—" Sorry, sir, but all our horses are out at present."—" Unfortunate !"

At this moment the dessert was placed upon the table, together with a pint of what my husband always, in such houses, chose to call " Day and Martin ;" and we made up our minds to proceed, in what we rather ostentatiously termed " our own carriage." Just as we were about to order it to be got ready, however, we were told, that " if the lady would not object to go to town in 'a return chaise,' there was one at the gate." To this proposition I vehemently objected, declaring, that I preferred the risk of catching cold to such a method of travelling. I had various reasons for this: the man might stop on the road, or he might take up other travellers. In short, I was full of terror at the idea of finding myself alone in a hired carriage for the first time; but my fears were treated as childish. The driver of the chaise was known to the landlord ; and, as to my objections, they could be provided for. Finally, the post-*boy*, an elderly but honest-looking fellow, was called in, and stipulations were made to satisfy all my scruples. He was paid a sum over and above his demand, on the condition that he should not admit any person on the road to a share of the chaise, which was to set me down at my own door in London without stoppages by the way. The weather showed no symptoms of clearing up, nay, the rain

became every moment heavier; and, though I longed to ask my husband to set off in the pony-chaise, and drive along-side of mine, I could not press his doing so at the risk of the wetting he was sure to get before the afternoon could brighten, and I ultimately consented to leave him with his fruit and wine, and the chance of better weather.

It must be understood, that the room in which we had dined was detached from the house, and placed on the right-hand side of the carriage-entrance, like a park-lodge, the door opening into the gateway, and the window to the street. On the opposite side stood a fac-simile, as it seemed for symmetry, of this little parlour, The coach I have mentioned had not yet removed from the gateway, and the chaise in question was drawn up beyond it, close to the window of the twin-parlour just mentioned. The shower thickened at this crisis; and an umbrella being provided, my husband conducted me under it to the chaise, into which I was quickly assisted, and, in melancholy mood, found myself instantly on my road home.

I now turn back. My husband, after he had deposited me in the carriage, and seen it start, being satisfied that he had made a very prudent arrangement, turned sharply round in order to regain shelter in his room, and for a time take his "ease at his inn." His quick eye discerned,

however, at this moment, at the window close to him, a silver embroidered jacket, the young and handsome wearer of which was craning his neck very eagerly (as Mr. Mathews *thought*) after the receding chaise, and, before he could reach his own room on the opposite side, a violent ringing of a shrill hand-bell startled his ear, and summoned the waiter in great haste to the officer's parlour. Before Mr. Mathews could seat himself, the man rushed out, and in hurried accents, as he ran up the yard into the "bar," cried out "Ostler! you must bring out that 'ere officer's horse *directly!*" —"What!" soliloquised my husband, "in this pouring rain? — very odd! I wonder whether 'that 'ere officer' is the one I saw looking after the chaise!" This doubt was immediately converted into certainty; for, leaving the door of his own room ajar, he peeped through the hinge side of it, and in the next minute the ostler trotted the horse up to the opposite door, and the waiter ran in at the same time with the bill, for which he had evidently been despatched when he called for the horse. After a brief pause, a quick "Thank'e, sir;" for something over and above, for himself, was audible, and in another minute the aforesaid mass of blue and silver was visible, properly mounted, and off at a gallop in the direction of the chaise, apparently regardless of the pelting rain, and leaving a nearly full decanter of wine, &c. upon the table! The next

instant a violent ringing was heard in the other parlour. In ran the waiter, and then out again; and the same accents that, three minutes before, had summoned "*that 'ere* officer's horse" now commanded the ostler to bring out "*this 'ere* gentleman's *shay directly!*" The second order was not so expeditiously executed as the former had been, owing to the "concatenation" of its details; but, in all "deliberate haste," it was at last produced, to the impatient owner's relief, who, making the only provision in his power against the weather, by sheltering his legs under the leathern apron of the chaise, followed the officer and his example, by leaving untasted the fruit and wine for which he had paid, upon the table, the landlord, ostler, and waiter, all staring after him as he drove from the gateway, in amazement at this second mystery, and unaccountable agreement in the conduct of two persons evidently unknown, as they believed, to each other. The pursuer, however, proceeded, to the obvious disappointment of little cob, who, sulkily resenting his being snatched prematurely from his feed and dry stable, refused to be driven like a gentleman's horse, and therefore, for the first, and, I believe, for the last time, in his new place, received a good flogging from his generally considerate and humane master. It will be easily believed, that a fat, half-tired pony, with a four-wheeler fastened to his back, was no match for a full-

sized pair of horses, of accustomed speed, and no superfluous bulk to impede their progress, with the additional advantage of having many minutes the start of their pursuer. The hope of overtaking the chaise was therefore forlorn; but, desperate with vague fears of my situation, and the probable affront I might receive, my unprotected state, &c. the attempt must be made; and poor pony rued the day he went to Dartford. The "pitiless storm" soon completely saturated the summer clothing of the anxious husband. After some time, he fancied he saw in the dim perspective a carriage, stationary at a road-side inn; whereupon he urged little cob onward with renewed severity, and at length came sufficiently near to believe that he recognised the back of the very vehicle he had looked after a moment before he caught the detested eyes of "Blue and Silver" similarly directed. On he flogged—every instant strengthened his expectation of reaching his object, which still seemed immoveable; and he had reason to believe his worst anticipations verified, for on the right hand of the postilion's saddle stood "that 'ere officer's horse," evidently fastened by his bridle; and, as if more were required to render him completely *satisfied*, he beheld the veritable sleeve of "Blue and Silver," stretched out of the window, conveying alms to a wretched woman, who stood near it, with a child on her

back. In three minutes more the four-wheeler must have reached the spot—but on the instant, as ill luck would have it, the postilion remounted, and off again went the chaise—officer and all! This was wretched indeed.

The carriage was soon out of sight. The pursuer was almost frantic with disappointment and conjecture. He asked himself whether *indeed* the chaise he had seen was *the* chaise. It was true that I had expressed a feeling of great dread at the thought of a stranger being admitted, and the postilion had pledged himself not to obtrude any one—*this* officer might not be *that* officer—and if he were, the chaise might not be the one occupied by me. Speculation, however, was vain, and could not lessen his disquiet. His clothes, as I have before said, were "steeped to saturation;" and the continuous rain, beaten into his eyes by the wind, almost deprived him of sight. A novice in driving, he feared to attempt any act that interfered with the reins and whip, and the management of his not only sulky but otherwise troublesome cob; so that, after the first efforts to clear the rain from his face, he gave up the task of applying his handkerchief, and went on dripping as he was, and with a rational expectation of catching a cold that would completely lay him up. However, forward he went—a small ray of comfort suddenly cheering him, from the recollection of a rise in the

road, which might induce the post-horses to relax their pace for a time, and thus give him the advantage of his own unaltered speed, which he was resolved to preserve while whipcord proved a firm ally. As he reasoned, so it happened—the postilion, incumbered with the third horse, which very much objected to this novel method of journeying, and showed his discontent by starting and curvetting from time to time upon every petty provocation for revolt, was induced to take advantage of the rise in question, in order to appease the irritability of the charger at such ignoble bondage. This gave to the strenuous efforts of the drenched gentleman a decided advantage, and he whipped with such desperate energy that he gained ground so rapidly as at length to be near enough to the party in advance for his loud "*halt!*" to arrest the attention of the postilion, and somewhat startle the occupants of the chaise, which was immediately stopped. Another stroke of his whip brought the pursuer parallel with it; and, to the surprise of the young lady and the confusion of the young gentleman, appeared the soaked and angry husband, the rain dropping from his cheeks like tears, and the little cob panting and smoking—man and horse looking more deplorable than words can describe.

The first great effect of this apparition was noticeable in the conduct of the officer, who, before my husband could take breath, put out

his ungloved hand at the window, observing that "the rain appeared to be over;" (it was still pouring!) at the same time, with his other hand, he let himself out at the door on the opposite side to where the "injured husband" appeared; and running forward and releasing his horse, he put a fee into the hand of the postilion as he remounted, touched his cap gracefully to me; and, throwing a furtive glance at the new-comer, was out of sight before a word could be spoken by any other of the party.

The whole of these manœuvres were executed with a rapidity and precision which only a military life could teach, for these evolutions were performed in much less time than the telling takes. My husband could only *look* unutterable vengeance after him; for, besides being fastened securely by the leathern apron of the chaise, as I have mentioned, he was in such a miserable plight as to make him anything but alert in his movements; all he *could* do therefore was to assail the postilion with reproaches for his breach of agreement, who sullenly muttered something like an excuse on the score of the lady's non-resistance.

For my own part I sat in mute amazement—first at my husband's unlooked-for appearance, contrary to his intention at parting,—and next at his evident resentment at my fellow-traveller's presence, and the officer's *as* evident embarrassment at the sight of him. His exceeding wrath pre-

vented his making me readily comprehend why he came off so soon, in the rain. I therefore in silence obeyed his rather peremptory desire that I would quit the chaise, and, "rain or no rain," return to town with him, declaring that he would not farther trust "such a fellow" as the postilion, who helped me to descend from his vehicle, and I was *pulled up* hastily into the little chaise, where, in the course of our drive, the mystery of my husband's unexpected appearance was explained, and the whole of the dark plot elucidated.

On leaving Dartford, I had gone on quickly for some minutes in my solitary drive, when suddenly, through the windows, dimmed with the thick-falling rain, I observed, at some distance before me, an officer evidently endeavouring to shelter himself from the weather under a tree (I had not observed that he had passed by me first). The head of his horse was turned towards Dartford, indicating that to have been the point to which he was proceeding. A signal to the postboy made him stop; and, after a short parley, which I of course could not overhear, the man seemed to refer him to me: for the officer approached the closed window of the chaise, explaining that he had left Blackheath on a ride, and had been surprised by the sudden rain. Being desirous of returning thither, on account of the change of weather, he appealed to my *humane feelings* to give him shelter from so severe a storm, by

admitting him into my carriage. I was very young, very timid, and moreover quite unsuspicious of his deceit. I saw a *gentleman* (I had not seen him at Dartford, as my husband had)—I beheld the rain pouring upon him—I hesitated for a moment—and, in that moment he quitted the window, and giving his horse to the postilion, with great dexterity and quickness opened the carriage-door, and, without letting down the step, jumped in—with a profuse thankfulness for my "condescending kindness"—before I could summon a word with a view to exclude him. After my first embarrassment had subsided, however, I explained to him my intention of refusing his request, and told him (what he knew before) whence I had come, and how I had been induced to travel alone—talked of my *husband* in capital letters—informed him of the conditions that had been made with the postilion, &c., to all which my companion lent an attentive ear; and whatever were his original inducements for his pursuit and the *ruse* he had practised in order to travel with me, they never for a moment betrayed themselves offensively. All was refined politeness; and, as attention was not uncommon to one of my age, that which he paid me was not calculated to startle or displease.

The driver however, presuming probably upon the principal condition being waived, took the liberty of stopping at the road-side inn already

mentioned, without consulting us. The man was in truth very wet, and evidently thought, with the Irishman, that a glass of spirits would serve "to kill the water;" and, whilst he was regaling himself with some brandy, my gallant friend was induced to disburse a crown to a beggar-woman —perhaps in order that I might approve his generosity, or most probably because he had "no small change" about him. The driver now remounted, evidently *prepared for the weather*, whatever it might be for the rest of the drive; and the officer, remarking this, announced his own determination not to allow me to finish my journey alone, subjected, as I should be, to this man's discretion, —declaring that he would leave his horse at Blackheath, and see me in safety to my own door. To this I made objections, which he with much zeal endeavoured to overcome; when his arguments in favour of such an arrangement were interrupted by my husband's "*halt!*"

Thus terminated this double pursuit ("Oh, lame and impotent conclusion!"); which doubtless made the pursuers feel rather absurd, from the needless trouble, expense, and inconvenience both had encountered; while I, the unconscious cause of all, could not but feel amused in the sequel, and never after beheld a handsome young officer of hussars without associating with him the image of a tall angry gentleman, in a low carriage, furiously flogging a fat reluctant pony,

up hill, through a pouring rain. It is *possible* that this officer *might* have been the identical Captain of "the Tenth" alluded to by the military servant at Gravesend; and if so, I have no doubt that the lady whose name I have the honour to bear had some reasonable cause when she "went away along with" one who possibly was less susceptible of sudden attachments than him of the *blue and silver*.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Manchester, July 27, 1818.

I am very well in spite of my tongue, which is diseased to a frightful extent; and if it is not relieved shortly, I must lie by till something is discovered to relieve me. I here to-day submitted to a leach in my mouth, by advice of my beloved P——, who is in higher feather than ever. It was a most unpleasant operation; but probably may be efficacious. My complaint "reminded" P—— of a "whimsical circumstance. Henderson — er er um — sore mouth — nekym ur — leeches — glyd um — three instead of one — sy nyt num — according to Cocker — if one does good—um er—how much will three do — er um er — put in ersycern or vwog — bled for three days"— ha, ha, ha! I am delighted, my explanation has opened your eyes.

You may rely upon it, the interest of yourself and dear Charles is nearest to my heart; and that the object of my life will be to make him independent, and if I am blessed with health, it can and shall be done.

I had a great house last night at Liverpool, though the heat was near spoiling all. I have not time for particu-

lars. To-night I wrote to Simpson, to ask him to meet me at Oxford, that we may arrange matters there. I hope to be at home on Friday night.

C. MATHEWS.

In the course of the autumn of this year (1818) Mr. Mathews visited his Welsh friends, and performed at Swansea for the first time since his early glories there. He was received in public with almost tumultuous plaudits, and in private with the glow of kindly hearts, whose recollection of him, after twenty years' absence, was as fresh as if he had been the favourite of yesterday with them. He was lucky enough to find among this single-minded warm-hearted race, several of his first friends alive; and the meeting was mutually gratifying. He remembered how glad his youth had been made by the fire-sides of the respectable people who had courted him then, a friendless stranger; and they were gratified that in his raised condition he had retained a recollection so pleasing to them and honourable to himself.

We were at this time staying with our friends Mr. and Mrs. Rolls, at Briton Ferry; a spacious and beautiful mansion, the scene of unbounded pleasure, and which better deserved to be called happiness than any mode of living, on so large a scale, in which I ever took a part. Mr. Mathews contrived to go over to chat with his old friends at Swansea very often: and on one occasion

assembled them round a large table at the Mackworth Arms, where he gave them a dinner, and rehearsed old scenes again and again, till the eyes of his guests overflowed with tears of delight. Even little Saddington, the prompter of Masterman's company (Wynne's "Saddy"), the only theatrical remains of olden times upon the spot, was not forgotten by "the great London actor:" and on his return to us at night the good-hearted entertainer was as elated with the satisfaction he had given to the worthy people as if he had been receiving honours instead of conferring kindness.

In October, Mr. Mathews quitted Briton Ferry, leaving me with our friends till his return from his engagements in Ireland, his men of business, viz. Mr. Simpson his treasurer, and Mr. Edward Knight* his musician, having joined him at Swansea, where the carriage and servants, &c. remained, for the purpose of accompanying him on his voyage.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Passage, October, 1818.

I have the pleasure to tell you that we are safely landed in Ireland, after a passage of nineteen hours. I was sick the whole of the way, and driven from my usual place, the deck, by rain, which poured all night, over the head of the carriage; and my box-coat proved "in-ade*quate*." However, once in my berth I was warm

* One of the gifted sons of our friend "Little Knight."

and sheltered, and certainly better for the removal, but Simpson's young rhinoceros* prevented my sleeping. Luckily, we had but one passenger besides ourselves, and not one woman on board, so that the usual faint cries of "Steward!" and all the accompaniments, were avoided. I never before knew how to sympathise with the sick. George was a great sufferer; Edward a victim also, and afraid of being lost into the bargain. The captain had unconsciously made him nervous; for when Edward said, "I hope we sha'n't have any squalls?" he replied, "Never mind squalls, sir, if we haven't a fog: that is the only danger;"—and a deep fog was announced about ten o'clock, which lasted during our voyage. One of the horses suffered severely, but Falstaff† appears very little concerned. Even Fop‡ has refused his breakfast, though, like me, he did not taste food yesterday. You would have been exceedingly amused, even if you had been as sick as I was, to have heard him bark in the night when the captain roared out his orders; and when we were hailed by a passing packet, he thought he must do his duty, and was frantic at the impertinence of a question being put to us through a trumpet.

I am happy to say, that I left all illness behind me; I felt instantaneously recovered when my foot touched the Emerald Isle. I have eaten a hearty breakfast, and am preparing to depart for Kilkenny. Edward desires his love in reply. "How sweet's the love that meets return!" Kind regards to all at Briton Ferry.

C. MATHEWS.

* "A young Rhinoceros"—his idea of the noises peculiar to some sleepers, described under the general head of "snoring."—A. M.

† A favourite horse.

‡ A small pet terrier dog.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Dublin, October 9th, 1818.

I received your *peppering* to-day; but make some allowance for me. I waited from Monday until Friday without hearing from you; and what I said was more in sorrow than in anger. The rascally neglect at the stage-door has caused all the mischief. Contrary winds kept the packet, and therefore I did not receive your letter of Monday last until to-day, though it should have been here yesterday. But by Elder's means everything will be regular now.

Catalani did more wonders than a woman, and drained all their pockets; and as the fashion are all out of Dublin, I think I am doing capitally. Excuse haste, and assure me in your next that you have quite forgiven me for the uneasiness I caused you.

C. MATHEWS.

P. S. I have received a letter from a Mr. Rees Jones, who wants me to subscribe to a colliery speculation at Loghner! Ha, ha, ha! I wish Goldsmidt had not died, for then I should only have been accounted the *second* richest man in England.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Kilkenny, October 13th, 1818.

I write to you in great haste, merely to tell you how I am, where I am, and whither I am going. I arrived here on Saturday night, time enough to see "Macbeth" and "High Life Below-stairs." I have not time to enter into particulars, but have no hesitation in saying, that they are not only the best private theatricals I have ever seen, but that the whole play of "Macbeth," in point of decoration, scenery, choruses, &c. was better got up than it would have been at any theatre out of London. I was

quite astonished, and highly amused with the farce. Crampton, and a Mr. Corry, in the two Servants, inimitable. The latter is really a very fine actor.

I found Power * a highly-finished gentleman. I supped with them all after the play, and was very much pleased at my reception.

Briefly, however, as to my performance here. It will be a total failure. But I console myself, that it is in the way to Dublin; and Mr. M'Cullat only is to blame in recommending me to come. I am just in the situation of a benefit at York on the Monday after the race-week, and standing at the hotel on Tuesday, and seeing all the company pour out of town. Kilkenny itself does nothing for the private theatricals. They are supported by families from the neighbourhood, and even as far as Dublin. They finished the plays on Saturday night, and on Sunday they began to move. To-night there is a ball and masquerade given by the Rolls of these parts (Major Bryan), and everybody is going; and to-morrow morning all the horses in the town and neighbourhood are ordered, and by night the town will be empty. I have nothing but lamentations about my coming at such a time; but all agree that it would be totally useless to play to-morrow night, and therefore to-day is fixed on, at three o'clock! What do you think of that? It can't tell; it is impossible; for no bills were out till to-day at nine o'clock. However, all these people are of the first consequence and connexion in Dublin; and I am not at all annoyed. Nor can I grumble, for Mr. Power certainly deterred me as much as he could.

I am off to-morrow for Dublin. It is sixty Irish miles; and I mean to perform there on Saturday.

C. MATHEWS.

* Richard Power, Esq.—A. M.

P. S. Fop ran yesterday thirty-two miles, and is perfectly recovered. He put several flocks of geese to the rout, as usual.

The little animal just mentioned (which was one of the smallest of the terrier race), had journeyed with us two years before, and ran with the post-horses between thirty and forty miles a-day. The peasantry of Ireland hallooed after it with wonder, calling and perhaps believing it a rat; nay, at Limerick a poor fellow, one day on the borders of the town, exciting the particular commiseration of my husband, (who being, as usual, without money in his pocket, desired the man to call at his lodging the next day,) cried out, "Sure, sirr, I 'll not forget; and don't I know it 's the jintleman who has a rat always runnin' after his carriage?"

CHAPTER II.

The Mayor of Kilkenny and his Deputy.—Letters to Mrs. Mathéws—Miseries of Absence.—Anecdote.—Irish Pronunciation.—Mendicity Association.—Letter of the Lord Mayor of Dublin to Mr. Mathews.—Mr. Mathews's Reply.—Letter to Mrs. Mathews.—Mr. Mathews's great success in Dublin.—Anticipated Delights of Briton Ferry.—Theatre at Waterford.—Death of Queen Charlotte.—Epigram.—The disappointed Doctor.—Mr. Mathews and the Irish Beggar.—Letter to Mrs. Mathews.—Mr. Mathews at Ipswich in "The Actor of All Work."—His personation of *Scrub*.

A LITTLE adventure befell my husband at Kilkenny, on his play-day there, of which he did not write an account, but related to me on his return. It was one of those annoyances which, by a strange fatality, as it seemed, he was destined to experience in this country in the course of every visit. The following account from the Kilkenny newspaper explains the particulars:—

The Mayor of Kilkenny and his Deputy.

Mr. Mathews, the celebrated comedian, a gentleman by education, habits, and talents, arrived here on Satur-

day. He was received by our Theatrical Society with that amenity which distinguishes its members.. By their advice he issued bills for the performance of his interesting medley on Monday, at three o'clock, the fancy ball at Jenkinstown that night preventing an evening meeting. The bills were printed under the direction of a member of the society. Unfortunately, the urgency of the case, or inadvertency, prevented application for the permission of the mayor. In the course of the forenoon of Monday, while Mr. Mathews was lounging in the library at the Parade, the city constable, who immortalised himself, sword in hand, at the "Battle of the Brogues," rushed into the library, with fury sparkling in his eyes, and trepidation working in his countenance, and, with a roll of paper in his hand — "Is a M—M—M—Mr. Mathews here?" said he — (for the room was full of gentlemen). The maniac appearance of the constable induced several gentlemen to retire to the extremity of the apartment; but Mr. Mathews instantly announced himself. Upon this the constable unfolded his roll, which was one of Mr. Mathews's bills: —"How daredest you, sirr, put forth them bills without the mayor's permission? Hese worship is mad, and you must come along with me to the office directly." We happened to be conversing with Mr. Mathews at the time; and assuring him that the mayor was a gentleman, and that he could never authorize such conduct, we recommended him to wait upon and consult the gentlemen under whose advice he acted; but Mr. Mathews, perhaps remembering that "a dog's obeyed in office," went, accompanied by Mr. Simpson, to the mayor's office. On his return he ordered a few more bills to be printed, with the head, "By permission of the Worshipful John Kirchela, Esq. Mayor," ob-

serving: "The mayor was very polite, and, as you said, behaved like a gentleman; but his deputy, that ruffianly-looking fellow — I declare I thought I was arrested for high treason." The report went instantly abroad that Mr. Mathews was arrested, and that there would be no performance.

Some time afterwards the same constable went to the office at the theatre, and stated that the mayor expected, as customary, nine tickets (fifty-four shillings' worth), but that he (the constable) would not be so mean, throwing down four tenpennies for his own admission. This broad deposit of three shillings and fourpence, neither box nor gallery price, offended Mr. Mathews more than the public attack, or arrest, as it was called, and he ordered the four tenpennies to be sent after "the fellow."

Mr. Mathews had a very small but select audience; and, considering all the circumstances, he went through the performance with amazing spirit. His recitation, songs, and "Mail-coach Adventures," are great beyond anything of the kind ever attempted. No mention of ventriloquism was made in the bills, and yet in the exercise of this singular faculty he was eminent beyond the power of expression. We have heard the celebrated French ventriloquist, Le Comte, repeatedly, and we are not afraid to say, that he was superior in the exercise of this faculty.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Dublin, October 23rd, 1818.

I have the pleasure to say, I am now perfectly recovered, voice and all. My tongue is *in statu quo;* and relief appears hopeless. Every medical man I consult

totally disapproves of the mode of treatment resorted to by his predecessor. This is comfortable, and so *cheering!*

I was miserably ill at Kilkenny; and suspecting the cause, discontinued the medicine for a day or two. On my journey I commenced it again, and it nearly drove me mad. I can conceive nothing more horrible: the fever, headach, lassitude, sickness! I was afraid to attempt to walk by myself; my legs tottered under me, and I had the sensation of "Very drunk yesterday" about me. At last I became so miserably ill that a physician was sent for, and I was obliged to "up and tell him" about my tongue. "Why, sir, the man who gave you laudanum was mad, and you were mad to take it." I never wished myself a queen but at that moment; she would not have had a sore tongue six months, thought I. However, certain it is I got gradually better when I discontinued the laudanum, though it has taken four or five days to drive away the effects from my constitution. Observe, I was told this same Dr. ——— was one of the first physicians in Dublin. On my repeating this phrase a day or two afterwards, I was answered—"First! Sure he is an ould woman!"

Funny people — funny fancies. "A mad world, my masters." H——'s dear cottage at Monkstown has brought me about again. I did not return thence till yesterday, five o'clock; and the repose, after the noise and turmoil of this city, added to the beautiful air of Dunleary, has completely renovated me. I went through my third performance last night without being distressed at all.

I have had the gratification of rejecting with scorn and derision an overture to play in Crow Street. On Sunday morning I perceived a placard, a foot and half larger

than mine: —" Mr. Charles *at Home also*." * He has taken a room, and is *conjuring* the people to come and see him.

C. MATHEWS.

Notwithstanding his professional success, and much private kindness, in Ireland, there always appeared some annoying circumstance as an alloy to it all. Mr. Mathews's apparent fretfulness in the course of his letters at this time, will, I feel convinced, be excused on account of the mental harass he endured, superadded to his constant suffering from the disorder in his tongue.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Dublin, Friday.

I thank you most sincerely for writing so often; it is a great solace to me; for in my blue-devil fits my fiend is ingenious in tormenting, and I am sure to brood on all sorts of imaginary ills. I cannot bear the distance I am from you and dear Charley, and be happy. A few lines of Curran's were very congenial to my own feelings, as I read them two or three days back, when wandering all alone on Kilkenny Hill:

> Whether we 're sunder'd by the final scene,
> Or envious seas disjoining roll between;
> Absence, the dire effect, is still the same,
> And death and distance differ but in name."

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* This was the person before mentioned who offered his *services* to Mr. Mathews when his houses overflowed every night, on the condition of sharing the profits.—A. M.

I have been for two days at Seapoint, on a visit to an Englishman. It is a large hotel and boarding-house, built on the shore four miles from Dublin. On Wednesday about forty promised to dine at the hotel; at half-past five the dinner-bell rang; at six we sat down (about twelve). At half past six, a Mrs. Butler and two ladies came running in, apologizing for not having time to dress, having just arrived in their carriage from Dublin. After they had been seated nearly ten minutes,—would you believe it? Mrs. Butler threw down her knife and fork, and with a screaming brogue, that made me think the colonel her husband had struck her,—"O—h! I vow to God I forghat Hamilton!"—"Ah, blood and 'ouns, is it Miss Hamilton, you mane?"—"Uphon my worrd I left her at ould Beggs's the dentist, and was to call for her; and I forghot it!" This is actually true; and her two friends screamed with laughter; they had not missed a young lady under their care in four miles! This poor creature came in about seven, having been obliged to hire *an ack:* and, if you remember those vehicles, you will fancy her pleasant situation! However, she came in with perfect good humour, and eat her dinner as if nothing had happened. I suppose they are used to it. Now, do you know, I was the only one of the party silly enough, to feel serious about this; I felt, I believe, exactly what I should have done had she belonged to me (though she was "welly ûdley," as little Jessie Rolls used to say): I could not feel myself comfortable in their society.

I cannot resist relating another anecdote. Some of these gentry have amused themselves with private theatricals; and Mr. Giles had corrected one of the amateurs, who pronounced the word *full* like *gull.* The Irishman complied with this hint on the night of performance; but

on the day I dined at Seapoint he called out, "Sure, Giles, you 're wrong about that word, after all; I have found it in poetry, my boy: Hudibras has it; and I am right, for he has made it rhyme to 'pull;'" (which he also, of course, pronounced like *gull!*) Ha! ha! ha!

I have not time nor room to enter into particulars, but an attempt has been made to bully me into charity; and because I behaved with a little spirit, the signal for attack was given. I have come off victoriously, as you shall hear in the sequel, which, as they would say here, *is not over yet.* You may suppose the annoyance I suffered, when "a damned good-natured friend" brought me the paper. "It is rather hard," said I; "on this visit I thought myself more secure than ever, for I have spent every leisure hour wandering by myself under hedges, and picking pebbles on the sea-shore. I thought I could not offend anybody; but because I have offered more money to a charity than some of the first shop-keepers in Dublin (this is my only offence), I am, at four o'clock on the day of my performance, instead of getting my dinner, obliged to sit down to defend myself in the newspapers from a malevolent attack." *N'importe—c'est égal.* Oh, my prophetic soul! before I got to Carmarthen I felt my heart sink, and repented coming. You remember my sudden fright last year. Was I not justified? How I long for the ceremony of rolling myself on the sand at Holyhead! Thank God! for the last week my health has been unusually good, and I have borne my troubles manfully.

C. MATHEWS.

The particulars of the annoyance to which Mr. Mathews alludes in the above letter will be explained by the following correspondence:—

TO CHARLES MATHEWS, ESQ.

SIR, Mansion-House, Oct. 28th, 1818.

A deputation of the managers of the Association for Suppressing Mendicity in this city, having waited on the Lord Mayor, to represent the depressed state of the funds of that Association, and in consequence, to request that his Lordship should communicate the circumstance to you, in the hope and expectation that you would be humanely pleased, by the gratuitous exertion of your eminent talents before the public, on some evening early in the ensuing week, to create means whereby to continue the great object for which the Association was formed,—I am therefore desired by his Lordship, most earnestly to entreat that you will take this important subject into your consideration, and to add, that from your general philanthropy and public spirit, his Lordship confidently anticipates your ready compliance with the suggestion of the committee. I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient humble servant,

GEO. ARCHER.

To the Proprietor of the Freeman's Journal.

SIR,— In the report of the meeting of the Society for suppressing Street Begging in Dublin, published in the *Dublin Journal* of Monday evening last, to my great surprise I read the following paragraph: "A letter from Mr. Mathews having been read by the Secretary, in which he declined exerting himself in behalf of the funds of the Association, as had been previously requested, Counsellor Connor rose and said, he thought Mr. Mathews might have been induced, as a benevolent man, and one inclined

to show his gratitude to the citizens of Dublin, for many favours bestowed upon him, to assist the Association in obtaining contributions by means of his performance, for a charity so important, and so dear to the inhabitants of Dublin; but Mr. Mathews *had declined*—possibly on good grounds,—he (Mr. Connor) was not inclined to examine them."

Now, sir, I will not dwell upon the cruelty of such a remark, or upon the injury it is likely to do me with the public; and my feelings are too much hurt to trust myself to make comments upon an assertion so totally devoid of foundation. I can only say, that if Mr. Connor did really say what is imputed to him by the reporter, "I am in amazement lost" how he could make such an assertion, in the face of my letter, just read to the meeting; and I am equally astonished, that that letter should not have gained me one friend in the meeting, who would have informed Mr. Connor, that he had totally misunderstood its purport. I am very much averse to obtruding my name unnecessarily before the public, but I am compelled, in justification of my conduct, to send you the copy of a letter I sent to the Lord Mayor, in reply to his Lordship's application to me, stating, that it was the wish of the Association I should give up one night's performance at the Fishamble-street Theatre, for the benefit of the charity. I trust, sir, you will do me the justice to publish this letter, and I feel confident that every person who reads it will be equally amazed with myself how such an interpretation could be put upon it, and will acknowledge how undeserving I am of the censure so unjustly passed upon my conduct.

I am, sir, your obedient servant,

C. MATHEWS.

22, Parliament-street, Tuesday, Nov. 3, 1818.

To the Lord Mayor of Dublin:—

My Lord,

I regret exceedingly, that the application of the managers of the Association for suppressing Mendicity have deprived me of the pleasure of offering a contribution to their excellent institution. I had reasons, (and I trust, proper reasons,) for deferring my intention to subscribe until the conclusion of my performances in Dublin; and I certainly meant my donation to be proportionate to the success of my undertaking; and, as I had mentioned this intention to some persons in Dublin, interested in the charity, I was in some degree pledged to the performance of it. I must think the application to me, to give up my part *of the profits of my trade*, is rather indelicate, as every other individual in society is allowed the gratification of making a voluntary contribution. Still, however, I am so sincere a friend to the principle upon which this excellent institution is formed, that I will comply, rather than not contribute to its permanent establishment; though I must repeat, how much more complete my satisfaction, would have been, to have been left to the dictates of my own feelings.

Therefore, *if it is pressed*, I will give the profits of a night at the Fishamble-street Theatre, before I leave Dublin, of which I will give your Lordship due notice.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's obedient servant,

C. Mathews.

The editor of the newspaper in which this correspondence appeared adds the following remarks upon the subject:—

This letter we conceive evinces good feeling, good sense, and a manly spirit, chastened with much delicacy on the part of Mr. Mathews. We consider it unfair, indelicate, and unjust, to call upon Mr. Mathews, or any performer, and more particularly circumstanced as he is, to give up a night's profit of his trade, to further the views of any institution, however meritorious and worthy of support. Why should an actor, more than any other professional man, be called upon in this way? Why should he not be left to the exercise of his own free will, like every other member of the community?

Some years ago, an appeal similar to the one in question was made to Mrs. Siddons. She refused compliance, saying she could not afford to give the hundred pounds to be derived from a night's performance, but that she would, like any other member of society, give such a sum as her general income would justify. What could be more reasonable? However, Mr. Mathews goes farther. He states his original intention of giving a donation proportionate to the success of his undertaking. More ought not to be looked for,—and so much more ought not, in reason, to have been expected. He has to guard against the necessities of ill-health and age. The exercise of talents such as his, must soon make an impression on the constitution; and to call upon him, or upon any actor, to give up so much of his earnings is preposterous. Such appeals are unjust in principle, and the practice of them would injure an Association, for the success of which we feel a deep interest.*

* Sir Walter Scott (as related in Mr. Lockhart's Life of him,) has well remarked upon these inconsiderate and unreasonable demands on the talents of public people. Sir Walter

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Dublin, November 13, 1818.

My table is now strewed with notes, like an attorney's office, and I have two post letters to write besides this.

I am sorry to hear that you are low-spirited; and still more so, that I have contributed to them by my apparent neglect. If I had not been horribly depressed, you would not have had so much cause to complain; but it is not possible to write to such a merry set as you in general are at Briton Ferry, under such feelings.

My health, thank God! is most excellent; and I am elated now with the prospect of my return to you all. I have no objection to perform at Chepstow, if there is any prospect of success; but after Kilkenny, I shall be very cautious of trusting to anything but my own experience: as Chepstow will lie in my way, it may answer. I gave a night to the Mendicity Society on Wednesday. This is my last night here. I have gone on much in the old way, except one night, which was totally ruined by my ignorance of their customs, and no one would tell me;

being applied to by the friend of some needy poetess, for a gratuitous contribution from his pen to her work, says,

"Suppose this patron of the Muses gives five guineas to this distressed lady, he will think he does a great deal; yet he takes fifty from me with the calmest air in the world,—for the contribution is worth that, if it be worth anything,—there is no equalizing in the proposal."

In the case of Mr. Mathews, as rationally might a tradesman have been asked for the profits of one day's sale in his shop, as Mr. Mathews be expected to give up his professional earnings for this charity.—A. M.

it was on Holy Eve, which was exactly like acting on our Christmas Day. I am satisfied, however, and that's enough—for me, I mean. All 's well; and when I see you again, delightful hope! these miseries will be like a dream.

C. MATHEWS.

I have been "werry much applauded for what I have done," and I have strutted through the streets like a first-rate fighting-cock, and felt inclined to snap my fingers at all I met.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Waterford, November 20, 1818.

Ten thousand thanks for your cheerful kind letter, and the kindness expressed in it at my expected return. Did you think I could be so heartless as to proceed to town directly, without spending three or four happy days at Briton Ferry? Why I have looked forward to it with the delight of a slave emancipated, enjoying his liberty by anticipation: it has been the solace of my miseries. I have fattened on the joyful perspective — it has softened my pillow — and sweetened my rest. I have puzzled my brain very much to know what you mean by "your trunk is *not* arrived yet." If you mean *my* trunk, I hope soon to "new climes to bear" it, for "friendship lives hence, and banishment is here." This is a wretched place for theatricals; the first night very bad; nobody knew I was to act till the morning of the day I appeared; and the second night the rain prevented the possibility of the people going out. The theatre is only temporary—no

boxes: I don't know a human being; but the manager is a *rara avis*, a gentleman; and I board with him in a most comfortable and clean house. The pit-boxes are generally taken for to-night, and the day is beautiful.

I had written thus far, when the Mayor himself rapped at the door, to say, that the Queen is dead. This has so sadly deranged me and my plans, that I know not what to do, or what to say; the play is stopped, and the poor manager in despair. Oh, had she died a week ago, I might have been comfortable and happy with you at Briton Ferry! I must break off. More distresses! I have just received a letter from Dublin, informing me that poor Simpson has had a relapse, after being, as they wrote yesterday, able to get up and come down stairs. M'Nally says, "he is so seriously ill, that we are all alarmed, and he himself seems to have given up all hopes of recovery. I have, therefore, called in Surgeon-General Crampton, who has applied a great number of leeches, and he is now more free from pain; but I fear not out of danger." Oh that horrid typhus!—that frightened me away last year. My poor Simpson!—I am distressed beyond description—what can I say to his family? I cannot go to him to-day now, without posting; it is one hundred miles, and everybody dissuades me from going alone. I must now await the arrival of another letter, and therefore will delay this one day, as all my plans are dependent on him.

Saturday.—I have got a letter; Simpson is pronounced out of danger, which has relieved my mind from a millstone weight of anxiety. Once again, all my schemes are deranged; the good people here, who did not care one farthing about me while they could see me, are flocking round the manager to press me to stay now they cannot.

Is there not a fatality attending my expeditions to this country? "O my prophetic soul!" O Milford Haven! O Holyhead! how will I roll upon either of thy sands, if I am permitted to see thee once again. When I began this letter to you, I thought all was in a fair way, and I felt quiet and repose. How I have been hampered, and torn, and puzzled before it is finished!

I thank God most gratefully, that my health is robust and excellent, beyond all former precedent! even my tongue, since I left off all medicine (my bane) is infinitely better. Never mind, I look forward with rapture, my dearest Nancy, to our next meeting. O you dear, happy, happy, people! — in Paradise, (if you did but know it,)—how I envy you, and how I give thanks that you are there. God bless you all,—Rolls's, and Mathews's, and Johnnys, and Pattys, and Jessys, and Alexanders, Delamottes, and Sherratts, and Edwards's — prays poor, foolish, happy, miserable,

C. MATHEWS.

He believed, and really with great reason for his belief, that medicine had no power over his constitution. The effect, certainly, always disappointed his medical men; and never gave him relief in any of his complaints. This fact naturally rendered him sceptical of the power of the "healing art" generally, and he was very amusing upon this subject, when once induced to talk upon it, as he would then affect to discredit the possibility of human skill to penetrate the unseen causes of human suffering; and he certainly had

no faith in much medicine being requisite for anything. I remember his allowing a friend to introduce his own favourite apothecary to him one day, for some trivial indisposition,—heart-burn, I think, to which he was very subject. Mr. Mathews received the gentleman with great courtesy, and stated his case deliberately, asking him whether he thought he could relieve him speedily? He was readily answered in the affirmative; and consequently, it was agreed that some "little thing" should be made up. In about an hour a packet was delivered — some pills and half a dozen draughts, and received with great good humour. The directions on the label were strictly adhered to, and before the next morning's visit all had been duly swallowed. The apothecary arrived at length, and anxiously hoped his patient had found relief from his prescriptions. He was told that no alteration whatever appeared in the original symptoms or sensations. This naturally surprised the man of medicine, who, however, after once more attentively looking at his patient's tongue, which was freely submitted to his inspection, and feeling his pulse carefully, put on a cheerful and confident air, as if assured of ultimate success, and informed Mr. Mathews that he should *that* day alter the particulars of his draughts, &c,: but, to his amazement, the calm and apparently obedient listener, his *patient*, in-

formed him that he never took a second prescription where the first had failed! Remonstrance followed surprize at this extraordinary avowal; but no argument could move him who was determined, and the doctor left the house greatly chagrined. We were told soon after, that this person was the most inveterate bill-maker that ever existed, and never let any victim off under some pounds' worth of attendance. The idea of his disappointment amused my husband so much, that I believe it cured him of his temporary disorder.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Waterford.

I have very few minutes to write between the arrival of the mail and its departure; but I cannot allow you to remain in a moment's suspense after the kind anxiety you express on my account. Calm all your fears. Simpson is fast recovering, though not able to quit his chamber. He is out of all danger; I have received a letter from himself to-day. He wishes me to return to Dublin, as he cannot travel just yet — and still have a night after the Queen's funeral, at the Rotunda; but I will not return. Your letter would have determined me, had I no opinion of my own. I am delighted to have escaped; and the comparative calm I have enjoyed here would make me feel that going back would be a return to captivity; and the anxiety about the fever (though in some degree groundless) that you would suffer, has resolved me. I have written to him today, and wait the arrival of his letter to give you certain in-

formation of the time of my departure. I acted here last night, to the best house in the three kingdoms, I will venture to say. I have the blessings of the *poor*—actors; for to me they owe their salaries, which no other actors in Great Britain, I believe, will receive this week. I have been poetical, and cannot resist sending you the humble efforts of my muse.

> The death of the Queen has caused great perturbation;
> We must *mourn* by *command*, and throughout the whole nation,
> The theatres closed, the poor actors forlorn,
> Must starve. Other subjects can eat while they mourn.
> What follows is plain: 't is believed in all corners,
> The mourners are actors—the actors are mourners.

I must conclude, for fear of losing the post. God bless you! and thank you for your dear kind letter. Be assured I will fly to you the moment I am released, and I have no doubt very soon.

C. Mathews.

Mr. Mathews's dislike to being encumbered with money, exposed him, when from home, to many embarrassments; such as stoppages at turnpikes, and want of funds to answer claims for charity, when they touched his feelings during his rides. One of these inconveniences occurred to him at this time, on his return to Briton Ferry, and was the occasion of rather an interesting result. The whole party staying there had passed over in the passage-boat, with carriages and horses, early in the morning, on a visit to Swan-

sea. At the close of the day, on our return, Mr. Mathews rode forward; and arriving first at the ferry, recollected that he must wait for the coming up of his party, as he was without the means of paying his passage over. He therefore walked his horse about until the expected arrival of his friends. Just at this moment an Irish beggar, in the most miserable plight, came up, and poured forth all that lamentable cant of alleged destitution which it is their vocation to impress upon the *tinder*-hearted, and which seldom fails to draw forth sparks of compassion. My husband, however, assured the applicant (who declared he was "making his way back to ould Ireland without bit or sip for days together," and that "a halfpenny itself would be a treasure to him,") that he had not even a farthing to offer him. It was in vain; the wretched, almost naked creature still importuned him. At last he was told by him he supplicated, with some impatience at the tiresome and senseless perseverance, after this explanation, that so far from being able to bestow alms, he was himself at that moment in a situation to require assistance; actually, cold and damp as it was (November), compelled to remain at the water's edge till some friend came up who would frank him across the ferry. The man's quick bright eye surveyed the speaker with some doubt for a second; but, upon a reiteration of Mr. Mathews's assurance, that he was detained

against his will for want of a shilling, adding, that he was lame and unable to walk home from the other side of the ferry, or otherwise he might leave his horse behind him as security—the beggar's face brightened up, and he exclaimed, "Then, your honour, I'll lend you the money!"—"What, you! you who have been telling me of your poverty and misery for want of money!"—"It's all true," eagerly interrupted the man; "it's all true; I'm as poor as I said I was,—divil the lie's in it. I'm begging my way back to my country, where I've friends; and there's a vessel ready, I'm tould, that sails from Swansea to-night. I've got some money, but I want more to pay my passage before I go, and I'm starving myself for that raison; but is it for me to see another worse off than mysilf, and deny him relafe? Your honour's lame; now, I've got my legs, anyhow, and that's a comfort, sure?" Then taking a dirty rag out of his pocket, and showing about two shillings'-worth of "coppers," he counted out twelve-pence, and proffered them to Mr. Mathews, who, willing to put the man's sincerity of intention to the proof, held out his hand for the money, at the same time inquiring, "How, if I borrow this, shall I be able to return it? My house is some miles on the other side of the ferry, and you say you are in haste to proceed. I shall not be able to send a messenger back here for several hours, and you will then have sailed?"—"Oh, thin,

niver mind, your honour; niver mind; I shall do without it, sure," and was walking on. Mr. Mathews stopped him by saying, "Well, then, after all, I suppose you have plenty left, and you deceived me when you begged?"—"Oh, divil the farthing more, your honour, than what you saw."—"Well, then, how can I reconcile to myself to take so much from you?"—"Your honour's welcome to every farthing. Sure, some good-hearted crathur will give me more."—"But indeed I cannot think of borrowing what I cannot return."—"Oh, thin, may be, when your honour meets another of my poor distrist countrymen you'll pay *him* the twelvepenny; sure it's the same in the end."

Mr. Mathews was affected at the poor fellow's evident sincerity; but desirous to put the matter to the fullest test, he thanked his ragged benefactor and wished him a safe journey back to his country. The man, smiling with the most benevolent expression of countenance, cheerfully turned away, with a "Long life to your honour!" and proceeded at a quick pace across the burroughs, and was soon out of sight. Mr. Mathews, however, suffered him to go no farther towards Swansea than it was easy for him, with his horse, to overtake him; and when he did, he saw him trudging along upon his poor naked feet, whistling with the greatest unconcern. But when he was overtaken, and told that the person he had so

generously assisted could not prevail upon himself to use his gift, the poor fellow seemed really hurt, and in the most positive manner refused to take the money back again; and had not the obliged been on horseback, he would have been fairly distanced by the good-hearted Irishman. However, at this moment one of the expected Briton Ferry party rode up to them, and, had this not happened, it was the firm resolve of Mr. Mathews to go on with the beggar till he met some of his friends. The gentleman lent my husband what he required, with which he not only overpowered the man's loud refusal of the principal, but convinced him that he might with a safe conscience receive an interest, which made him independent of further charity on his journey, and take him back to "Ould Ireland" much richer, probably, than when he left it.

On our return home, Mr. Mathews passed a short time at his cottage, and then resumed his provincial labours.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Ipswich, January 19, 1818.

I am, as usual, in a gallop. Off to Eye in ten minutes; and have snatched up my pen while waiting for a bill at the printer's, to say, I am marvellously well, in spite of my tongue. Yesterday, as before, never sat down till dinner. Not a lamp, not an article left in any theatre;

all to be provided; and if Poole could stir for me, he is now better employed.

It is wonderful how I get through my work, with my brain addled with new matter; * but I am getting on capitally with that, and have done one act at Norwich perfect. Norwich-week gave me 130*l.*! Bravo! above the right reading. This week will be, at least, my usual 100*l.* I have no doubt.

Direct my letters and papers this week to Ipswich, as I shall be back here on Friday morning, and go about Monday. On Tuesday, Chelmsford; and Wednesday, home. I have only time to say all this, as you might have been otherwise in an uncertainty. Let me know if you are quite well. Your letters are so kind, that they heal my heart of the little pangs this strolling brings with it. God bless you, my dearest wife, and preserve you for me, is my prayer! Love to dear Charles.

C. MATHEWS.

The following admirable article upon my husband's recent performances at the above place, appeared at this time:—

Mr. Mathews's ability decidedly lies in modern comedy. His power of giving direct imitations of living manners exceed those of any actor we have ever known, while his versatility in the application of this power evinces a flow of animal spirits, an excitability of fancy, a strong and vivid apprehension of the ludicrous, and a mobility of muscle no less surprising. In the course of two songs, "The Nightingale Club" and "The Humours of a Play-

* The study of his forthcoming entertainment.—A. M.

house," (both of which were given twice, but with such essential differences as scarcely to be recognized for anything like the same,) we estimate the number of characters introduced at fifty at the least; and a single sentence put into the mouth of each was accompanied with gestures sufficiently expressive to carry to the least pregnant apprehension a complete whole-length of the individual, as well as the birth, parentage, education, transmutation, and present profession of the party, from the link-boy at Covent Garden to the lady whose panels were driven in, and who lost her arms in the most agreeable crowd we ever mingled with. The nice discrimination and the original distinctions are most surprising, and the natural endowments and the attainments in art, which constitute such nice perfection in mimicry, are no less entertaining than rare.

The "Actor of All Work," the farce on Monday, like "Killing no Murder," employs Mr. Mathews in his own way, and is indeed written to display him, for he sustains seven characters. The absolute novelty of this piece is perhaps only to be found in the introduction of a highly finished personation of the great French tragedian, Talma, both in his private manner and his public capacity. Mr. Mathews's French personifications are said to be quite as close as those of his English, while the novelty, and the information afforded to us untravelled country-folk, render the character if possible more interesting. Besides this, the most prominent feature, the author has availed himself of defects in articulation and of dialect, and personal peculiarities, to call into action the inexhaustible variety of the modern Proteus. A "conversation between the Scotch uncle below, and the Northumbrian nephew above-stairs,"

offers occasion for Mr. Mathews's ventriloquism in a very effective manner. Upon the whole, this little piece is contrived to exhibit powers which no man does, or perhaps ever did possess, in the same diversity and perfection as Mr. Mathews.

On Wednesday evening we again went to see Mr. Mathews in the old-established stock play of the "Beaux Stratagem," already impressed with a strong assurance of his success in low comedy. *Scrub* is an excellent test of merit in that department of the histrionic art. How did Mr. Mathews perform it? We answer, as if it had been written for him. His looks alone, on his first entrance, were enough to make us quite content with our prospect of entertainment; so true and sparkling an index were they on this occasion, of the good-tempered roguery, the simple cunning, and diverting unassuming ignorance, which form the commixed ingredients of this finished original. Free from every alloy of the unnatural or the overcharged, his performance was exactly calculated to keep the audience in high spirits, without occasioning a single drawback from their enjoyment of legitimate mirth by the tasteless intrusion of vulgarity or buffoonery. Mathews's *Scrub* is alive to every incident that comes before him; he enters into the spirit, and participates in the effect, not only of what is expressed, but what the author means to have understood; and thus he amply repays the attentive audience, who are led to watch his by-play with the same scrutinizing regard which they bestow on his general acting. An example of this sort occurred before he had been a minute on the scene, or had spoken three words. It was in the second act, when *Sullen*, in going out, says to *Scrub*, "Get the things ready to shave my head;" and

Mrs. Sullen instantly observes, "Have a care of coming near his temples for fear you meet something there that may turn the edge of your razor!" Mathews's face at that moment was the very picture of abashed uncomprehending dulness. After an apparent cudgelling of his brains for a time, he ejaculates, with irresistible *naïveté*—"Ma'am!" The lady repeats her caution to him. Another awful pause ensues, but it is of short duration; the light of shrewd perception suddenly bursts into his upper story, and its vivifying influence betrays itself in the ludicrous but eloquent workings of his countenance. Presently he lifts up his merry eyes; they meet those of *Mrs. Sullen*—and he reverently withdraws; but not until, by the most varied and significant changes, produced in the funniest set of features in the world, he had fully convinced his mistress, solely in physiognomical language, that he both took and enjoyed the joke. The loud and general applause which followed this *coup de maître* showed how well it told, but the sensation it occasioned can be but faintly imaged by description. For this reason we shall merely allude to the favourite scene between *Archer* and *Scrub*, by saying that the latter, inspired by ale, convulsed the house with laughter. It was as rich a treat of the kind as any in which we have ever shared.*

* This excellent description of my husband's performance of *Scrub*, is a faithful portrait of him in the character.—A. M.

CHAPTER III.

Mr. Mathews's second "At Home:" Trip to Paris.—Description of that Entertainment.—His Farewell Address.—Literary Pirates. — Ivy Cottage and the Picture Gallery. — Letter from Mr. Poole to Mr. Mathews: death of Madame Blanchard, the Aëronaut. — Letters from Mr. to Mrs. Mathews. — Letters from Mr. Poole to Mr. and Mrs. Mathews.

THE period destined for a second attempt (no less hazardous than the first) to keep an audience in attentive good humour for nearly four hours by his single exertions, — if *single* that can be appropriately called which is made up of so multifarious a whole, — had now arrived. Accordingly, on the 8th of March Mr. Mathews was again "At Home," and related his "Trip to Paris," * with increased reputation, and performed a dramatic act, called "La Diligence," † with equal success.

The following was the announcement.

The Public are respectfully informed, that having been abroad, they will again find Mr. Mathews "At Home," in his old quarters, at the Theatre Royal English Opera House,

* By Mr. Poole. † By Mr. James Smith.

Strand, on Monday next, March 8th, 1819, when he will have the honour to perform his

TRIP TO PARIS in their company.

PART FIRST.—Introduction.—Poetical Prqem.—Recitation.—Tours; why generally undertaken.—Piccadilly.—Lady Dory the Fishmonger. — Sir Dogberry Dory gone to Paris. — Mr. Gossamer, junior, the Juvenile Glover.—Mr. Gossamer, senior, gone to Paris.—Everybody gone to Paris.

Song—*Do as other folks do.*

Recitation.—Leaders and Followers of Fashion. — Low Life or Vulgarity: what is it? and where does it exist?

Song—*Paris is the only place.*

Recitation.—Why Mr. Mathews determined to go. — Dover Mail.—Digression on Sleep (not long enough to provoke it).—Pleasant Travelling Companions.—A voyage to Calais.

Song—*Delights of the Packet.*

PART SECOND.—*Recitation.* — Safe Landed.—Jabber.—Surprise.—A French Commissionaire. — Wonder. — Extraordinary Talent of French Children.—Astonishment! a French Diligence. — Bathos: French Posting. — Orthoepical Persecution; or poor Mr. Rogers and Monsieur Denise.—French Capital. — Meurice's Hotel. — Hiring a Valet-de-Place. — Anglo-Gallo-Hibernian. — Tuileries Gardens. — English Visitors. — Crowds of Cockneys.—Characters.—Craniology.—Mnemonics.—Physiognomy. — Mnemonics unexplained by Mr. Minikin. — Physiognomy ill explained by the Widow Loquax.—Craniology fully explained by

Song—*Lumps and Bumps.*

Recitation. — The Catacombs. — Lecture on Craniology, by the renowned Doctor Von Dunderdronk Von Hoaxburg Von Puzzledorff Von Chousehem.—Return to the Hotel.

Song—*A Day at Meurice's.*

PART THIRD. — *Recitation.*—Visit to the Théâtre Français. — Hamlet in Paris. — The Boulevards. — A Character.—Mundungus Trist.—Miseries.—More Miseries.

Song—*Heads for a Quarto; or, the Pains of Pleasuring.*

Recitation.—The Scotch Lady.—An Old Acquaintance.—Short Story about Something.—French Handbill in French English.—Lecture on England and the English Language, by Mons. Charles Guillaume Denise.—De Charlatanville.

Song—*The Departure; or, Now farewell to Paris' Revels.*

PART FOURTH.—A Mono-poly-logue Descriptive of LA DILIGENCE. *Diligenciæ Personæ:*

Jemmy, an English Boots at the foreign office (a very old acquaintance*) } Mr. Mathews!

Monsieur Peremptoire, a travelling Tutor, Mr. Mathews!!

Master Tommy Tarragon, his Infant Pupil, a "*Vox et præterea nihil*," . } Mr. Mathews!!!

Samuel Starch, Esq., "a tailor made him," Mr. Mathews!!!!

Hezekiah Hulk, a *great* Attorney of *Size* Lane . . . . . } Mr. Mathews!!!!!

Miss Evelina Evergreen, an old Maid, Mr. Mathews!!!!!!

And Monsieur Poudré Méneur, a French Postilion, . . . } Mr. Mathews!!!!!!!

The Songs will be accompanied on the Piano Forte by Mr. Knight.

I insert here a few of the contemporary criticisms on this performance.

Mr. Mathews yesterday evening recommenced his career of mirth; and, since the "Tea" of Foote, the "Coffee" of Woodward, and the "Sans Souci" of Dibdin, nothing has ever so forcibly arrested public attention. Though the partitions which commonly enclose the pit were removed, the orchestra cleared out, and three rows of spectators accommodated in the space usually given to the musicians, before the curtain rose the word "Full" was posted at the avenues of the theatre, and every part of the house crowded to an overflow. The stage presented the same simple appa-

* Namely, the *Boots* in "Killing no Murder," and one of the characters introduced in the Harlowe Picture.—A. M.

ratus of a table and a piano-forte; and with these for all his auxiliaries, this able actor was to go through an exertion of four hours' dialogue, disguise, and song. He commenced with a brief poetical address, and ranged on through the usual reasons, wise and absurd, for making tours. At Abbeville he meets with an unfortunate countryman, "poor Mr. Rogers," who is returning to England, under a medical prescription to avoid the slightest irritation of his nerves; and who is accompanied thus far by his friend Monsieur Denise, who torments him to death by correcting his pronunciation of the French tongue. Taking an affectionate leave of his orthoepical persecutor, who is to retrace his way to Paris by the coach at three o'clock in the morning, the exhausted and forgiving Englishman retires to bed—in the same room with Mathews. Between two and three in the morning the latter is aroused by a loud knocking, and inquiring what is wanted, is answered, "Not you—do not take the trouble to awake — I want my friend Monsieur Rogers — and have woke seven gentlemen already, one of which is not him!" It is the accurate Denise, who cannot depart till he has disturbed the slumbers of the poor invalid, to set him right in his last words on the preceding evening—"*Adieu, Denise,*" which he unfortunately pronounced "*Adjew Dennis.*"

St. Denis is so called from its patron, who walked thither from Paris after decapitation, with his head under his arm — a feat not so marvellous, as "the distance is only five miles, and the road excellent!"

At the capital, at the entrance into which a description is given, combining much force and truth with whimsical remark, our tourist resides at Meurice's hotel, which is quite an English colony. Here he hires an Irish valet-de-place, and becomes intimate, pro tempore, with his fellow-lodgers, Mr. Daniel Dowgate, Mrs. Loquax, Mr. Marmaduke Mi-

nikin, &c. These are his companions to *see the lions;* and their various characters, remarks, and adventures fill up the second and third parts. In Mr. Dowgate we recognised an admirable imitation of a well-known character in the festive circles in London, with whom we were acquainted; and his many friends will, without displeasure, see the amusing eccentricities of the respectable Mr. James Whittle, of Fleet-street. His John Bull-ism, his "classical" phraseology, his "catch the idea," and other by-words — his look, voice, and action, and even way of thinking—are all executed with surprising felicity. From this specimen we should presume that all the other characters are drawn from *individual* life, were we not convinced of it by the truth of the *individuality* of the portraiture.

Among the Parisian scenes, we can only designate a few of the most striking:—A visit to the catacombs, and a lecture on craniology by a professor with a long German name — pro Spurzheim; a day at Meurice's; a humorous song, with comic recitations, in Mr. Mathews's best style; a visit to the theatre, and burlesque imitations of Talma's Hamlet; the Boulevards, and a rencounter with a sad traveller, Mr. Mundungus Trist, whom every thing afflicts ("*very annoying, but so it is*"), who cannot even be sick at sea as he wishes, like other people; who is full of tribulation, and, among the rest, has "to go home to his wife, — very annoying, but so it is." Sir John and Lady Munchausen. The old Scotch woman in Paris, with a good story of her husband telling "his worthy coadjutor Maister Henry," who wished he was dry, when "dreeping wi' wet" from the rain on his way to preach, to "gang to the pupit, for he would be *dry enough there.*" And, finally, a lecture on England and the English language, by Mons. Denise. This

lecture is a droll satire upon the herd of French tourists in England, like whom, Mons. Denise, who had been a prisoner of war at Portsmouth, is fond of drawing general conclusions from particular facts; in which his want of knowledge of our language causes him to make confounded mistakes. For example, one branch of his discourse is, that "all the people of England are *boxeurs*." "When I look from my littel vindo in de prison at Portesmout, I see de ladies box, and de gentelmans box, and sometimes de ladies and gentlemens box the one wis de oder. Den I read in de paper dat the Duchess of B—, the Earl of C—, Lady G—, and Lord F—, all go to box at de Opera. Wen de man is tried for any crime, de witness box — and if he be found guilty, the jury box. One day everybody box — it is Crissmas day — the washmen, de beadles, de shurshwardens — the constables and all de parish box one house after anoder. So you see the English are a nation of Boxeurs." Our countrywoman Mrs. Loquax blunders in the same way; for she visits a lady who has a *sore-eye* (soirée) every Monday evening — which Dowgate advises to be well washed with rose-water every Tuesday morning.

In the fourth part we have the Paris Diligence, in which eight characters are well supported by this single actor. It is an amazing effort, and we imagine unexampled as a piece of mimicry.

Mr. Mathews, as usual, contrived to keep the audience in continual laughter throughout the evening — a period of almost four hours. He is indeed "a fellow of infinite jest." His present performance, "A Trip to Paris," is a humorous, but rather severe, satire on the rage of the English for visiting the French capital; and he carica-

tures them very whimsically, carrying his audience with him through a series of the most ludicrous scenes, and introducing them to an almost endless variety of characters. After his introductory address, a very piquant poetical proem, he commences a dissertation on tours and tourists generally, and describes his own reasons for becoming a tourist, that he found all the world going to Paris, and so he resolves to "Do as other folks do." He then digresses rather into a disquisition of fashion and its followers; and accounts for the decline of Margate, Ramsgate, Brighton, Cheltenham, and Harrowgate, as places of fashionable resort, by their becoming too fashionable; and prophesies the downfal of Paris from the same cause. A philosophical disquisition on low life or vulgarity follows, in which he proves and illustrates that no class of persons are so low but they will still look down upon somebody as beneath them. At length he sets out for Paris in the Dover mail, and describes his travelling companions, his arrival at Dover, custom-house adventures, &c. till he embarks. Then follows "*The Delights of the Packet,*" in a song intermixed with recitation, absolutely overflowing with humour. His personification of an elderly respectable sort of gentleman, very sea-sick—and very much ashamed of being so—was ludicrous in the extreme, and set the house "on a roar" at almost every word.

The Second Part commences with their safe arrival at Calais, and a description of the various and minute *grades* of the French *commissionaires*, even to as low as a little errand-boy. The journey to Paris furnishes matter for much ludicrous description, and the capital itself, especially the English visiters there, supplies him with an almost inexhaustible fund of humour.

After a variety of adventures at the Tuileries, the

Boulevards, the Palais Royal, a visit to La Belle Limonadière at the Café des Milles Colonnes; after listening to a learned lecture on craniology, in the Catacombs, by Dr. Von Donderdronk Von Hoaxburg; visiting the theatres, and seeing the French *Hamlet;* being introduced to his favourite *Old Scotch Lady*, &c., he prepares for his departure from Paris, and his return to England.

The last scene is the "Bureau des Diligences." And here he performed the whole *propriæ personæ* of such a place, almost at one and the same time, with inimitable drollery—*Jemmy*, an English "boots;" a *Travelling Tutor;* his *Infant Pupil;* a *Dandy;* an *Invisible Ostler;* a *Great Attorney of Size Lane;* an *Old Maid;* and a *French Postilion.* In all these discordant characters he was completely at home, and contrived by the rapidity of his motions, and his distinct variations of speech, to make it appear as if they were all present at once. Eventually he seated them all in the Diligence, and it drove off the stage, the travellers singing a "Grand Finale," and making their adieus to the audience as they pass.

A more highly-finished and amusing picture of life has never been exhibited. We cannot part from it without again particularizing that richest of all humorous personations, the *Old Scotch Lady*—it is perfectly unequalled in point of originality and whim; our sides still ache with the remembrance of the exclamation "Vary wet indeed!" in her description of the "dripping day." Amongst the "After-thoughts, or Additions to early Performances," is the accidental fall of *Miss Evergreen's* basket, containing her puppy-wuzzy. Here Mathews's imitation of a yelping cur is so ludicrously natural as to heighten, if possible, our astonishment at the faculty with which he is endowed.

Mr. Mathews closed his "At Home" on Saturday, the 5th of June, after a most splendid and successful season, on which occasion he spoke the following Farewell Address:—

Ladies and Gentlemen,—The longest journey must have an end, and the pleasanter our progress on the road, the more painful is the parting with our fellow-travellers. Such is my feeling at this moment, when, after travelling forty nights to and from Paris in your company, the hour has at length arrived when I must reluctantly bid you farewell.

If I may be allowed to judge of the cordial smiles with which my labours have been cheered throughout, I may venture to hope that you participate in this feeling; and I shall therefore solace myself, during the interval of separation from my indulgent friends, with the pleasing task of preparing to receive them "At Home" again next season, with new matter for their entertainment.

To this end I shall study new characters, and aim at new personations; not with an unworthy view to outrage private feelings, by holding up personal defects to ridicule, but with the more useful, and at the same time less offensive object, of showing how easily peculiarities become disagreeable if suffered to grow into habits; and how frequently habits, if so indulged in, may become ridiculous.

Such, with all humility, I consider to be the fair game of what is attempted to be *degraded* by the name of mimicry. It is *that* in the *physical* world which *satire* is in the moral; and if the work of a *satirist* of *manners* be not degraded by the appellation of a lampoon, I know not why the exhibition of an *imitator* of *manner* should be classed with the mere grimaces of a buffoon.

I have thought it necessary to say thus much in defence of that which I consider as the very soul of the profession of an actor—*imitation;* for no one, I presume, will deny, that Shakspeare would have written in vain (so far as applies to stage representation) had actors attempted to play *Othello* with a fair face, or *Richard the Third* without a hump.

Thus it appears there are cases in which even personal deformities and defects may become proper subjects of satire. Such as the decrepitude of age affecting the follies and gay frivolities of youth; the rich and antiquated one-eyed lover ogling the young and beautiful victim of an odious passion; or a youthful coxcomb, with bandy legs, obtruding his pitiable deformity on your notice by exhibiting his otherwise pretty person in a quadrille. Such, in endless variety, are the fair and allowed objects of imitative satire. Still, I may perhaps be acquitted from any charge of vanity, when I assert, that even in such cases a more than ordinary accuracy of observation is necessary to hit off successfully those nice distinctions of character and manner which form the wide difference between a correct portrait and a vulgar caricature; and if I have succeeded, or can succeed (by holding the mirror up to Nature, and showing Folly her own image, and Vice its own deformity) in correcting any one of a foolish habit, or an offensive peculiarity; and, above all, in affording the public a few hours of harmless mirth, I think my labours amply rewarded, and that my life has not been altogether passed, or my humble talents exerted, without some degree of usefulness.

Ladies and Gentlemen,—It now only remains for me to offer my grateful acknowledgments for the liberal, indeed *splendid* patronage I have received. So greatly has that

patronage exceeded my hopes, that I have to boast this season of having been honoured by the presence of some thousands of visiters more than attended me last year; and it is this unlooked-for increase of public favour that not only encourages a hope for the future, but stimulates every exertion of which I am capable, to merit, if possible, a continuance of your valuable; and, believe me, ever and highly valued kindness.

From the first year's "At Home" it was discovered that spurious editions of the performances were sold at the doors of the theatre; and Mr. Mathews was annoyed by seeing them in various parts of the theatre occasionally referred to by the persons thus imposed upon. As the whole of the pretended Entertainment was made up of the most contemptible trash that could be conceived, he had the mortification of hearing of it where the real performance was never heard; and frequently when on the stage he would find himself interrupted in a song by persons turning over the leaves of these books in order to trace in the words before them something resembling what they listened to. It was in vain that a notice appeared nightly in the bills, warning the visiters of the theatre that no printed edition of the Entertainments was genuine; people did not read this warning, and the nuisance continued. At last, grown bold by impunity, on the occasion of the "Trip to Paris," these pirates ventured to take down in short-hand some of the real matter.

This afforded a tangible opportunity for stopping their proceedings; and Mr. Mathews, in order to give publicity to the fact he had so often wished to impress, namely, that he never had, nor ever would, print his "At Homes," applied for an injunction to stop the sale of the pirated edition, which he obtained, and which was thus announced in the newspapers.

On Saturday an injunction was obtained by Mr. Mathews in the Vice-Chancellor's Court, to restrain John Duncombe, and Dean and Munday, from selling any more copies of two works, purporting to be parts of "The Trip to Paris" (written expressly for him by Mr. James Smith and Mr. John Poole), as delivered by him at the English Opera House.

In May we took possession of Ivy Cottage, which Mr. Mathews had purchased on a lease of ninety-nine years; a term which gave him *time* to look forward to much enjoyment of it. We found it scarcely finished, and the grounds unformed. A space near it was found for the addition of the Picture Gallery, which was immediately planned and begun, and the shrubberies, lawn, and flower-garden laid out.

About this period Charles declared his predilection for architecture. So earnest was he in his desire to make it his profession, that, after a great struggle, his father gave up his favourite wish of placing him in the church; and as it was

necessary, under this change of plan, that the boy should immediately begin his preparatory studies, the idea of college, where Mr. Richardson had declared that he would acquire distinction, was relinquished, and an agreement entered into with Mr. Pugin, the architectural draughtsman (and the *once scene painter* in Wales, when Mr. Nash and Mr. Mathews acted together,) to take the young artist for four years.

From this gentleman's design the Theatrical Picture Gallery was now completed; and no sooner had its owner formed this new tie to the spot, where to him happiness alone existed, than the very expense of maintaining it required his resignation of its pleasures, and his duty compelled his absence from it. Therefore, after he had satisfactorily placed his son in the only profession for which he had ever manifested an inclination, Mr. Mathews once more left home in pursuit of that bane of human life, and antidote to some of its cares — money. The large sums recently expended in raising the building I have mentioned, and in a premium to Mr. Pugin on Charles's account, rendered present exertions imperiously necessary to make up in some measure so considerable an outlay, in addition to the original purchase and furniture of the cottage, no mean amount in itself. Charles now began his architectural studies, in furtherance of which he accompanied Mr. Pugin to Paris.

TO CHARLES MATHEWS, ESQ.

My dear Mathews, Paris, July 6, 1819.

I wish I could find some better way of accounting to myself for your long and extraordinary silence than that of attributing it to an old refuge in similar distresses—"want of time."

I will admit that planting your own cabbages and cutting your own sallads is, after your long residence in a smoky city, an enticing occupation for you, and allow it all the charms and all the power of novelty. Yet rainy days are uncongenial with rural pleasures; and our climate must have undergone a considerable change for the better, if in the course of two long months there has not been a wet half hour, when you might have amused yourself with a pen and paper.

A dreadful accident has occurred here, which I saw and heard from my window. Madame Blanchard ascended from Tivoli in a balloon the night before last; it was illuminated, and she carried fireworks with her. Soon after rising, she entered a cloud, and was lost to the sight during several seconds. On reappearing she let off some of the fireworks, and shortly after I perceived a stream of fire issuing from the lower part of the balloon. In an instant it was in flames, and she fell, with a terrible rapidity, from a great height—still in her car,—struck with a frightful crush on the roof of a house just opposite my window, and thence rebounded into the street. I need scarcely add that the poor creature was taken up dead. It is said that she held with such force to the frame-work of her car that several of her arteries had snapt through the effort. She was buried yesterday. I cannot get rid of the recollection of what I saw and what I felt at the moment,

knowing as I did that it was beyond all human power to save her.

How is Mrs. Mathews? Is she amusing herself? Tell her I wish that the place may afford her all the happiness she deserves. This is wishing her a great deal, and perhaps something more than may reasonably be expected of any place in the world. As for you, all I wish about you is that you would come to Paris.

Remember me to young Sir Christopher Wren, and believe me ever

Sincerely yours,

J. POOLE.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

York, Aug. 1, 1819.

I arrived here last night safe and sound. Doncaster produced me sixty pounds and an excellent audience—all joyous, good, and right. Here, you are aware, I am to act "wi' t' company" and stay till to-morrow week. With the Belcombes to-day, who desire all sorts of love. Tommy Myers is alive and well also.*

Robins's letter I think is very satisfactory, and as that poor devil Thompson very apparently had no money, I am glad he is not incarcerated on my account.†

* One of the idiots before described.

† Mr. Thompson, the "gentleman" who in 1814 robbed him of his cottage, &c. He had been placed "in durance vile" by some other creditor. Mr. Mathews's men of business, in his absence, had discovered this, and purposed to keep him there, by enforcing his claim; but it was through life a principle with my husband never to imprison any debtor. But for this he might have manned a little *Fleet* of his own with persons who now walk free and forgetful of the friendship of which they were unworthy.—A. M.

I wish I could give you a better account of my tongue; but the fact is, I believe, that it is my work, and that only, that can account for its state; and, as my health is excellent in the midst of my fag, it is the most reasonable conclusion.*

Dr. B——n has found out that he could have cured me, if I had remained in town. He expressly said he had no practice in similar cases but leeches; he would try them three times, and if they failed he candidly confessed he had nothing else to try; that it could not be connected with the constitution with so healthy a man; that all inward medicines and lotions were useless. Now he has discovered, by his letter to Adolphus, that it *is* connected with the constitution, and has prescribed a pill, and a lotion for the tongue, and sends another message by Betty† about powders, which he never mentioned—which will produce no effect upon me at all.

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

York, August 14th, 1819.

My tongue has been so bad since I came here—I fancy with the heat, and with the exertion of acting six nights in the week (which I will not do again,) that I have applied to Dr. Belcombe. He is decidedly of opinion that it is not connected with the constitution, but local. I am now under his treatment, and am using a sort of

* In my account of the effects of this complaint, I have omitted to say, that occasionally, after a great deal of talking, his tongue would swell in a most extraordinary and alarming manner.—A. M.

† Henry West Betty, the once celebrated "young *Roscius*."—A. M.

liquid caustic, which plates the tongue in a case. It is very painful, and similar in its effects to Astley Cooper's applications; but he is so very confident of success that I heed not the pain.

This is the race-week, and the town what the people call empty — no families — no lodgings taken. All the people we know are alive and well. On Thursday last John Wilkinson came and asked me to dine with Mrs. Townend. There I met a party all turned seventy (some eighty), excepting myself and Mrs. Townend. Old Mrs. Wilkinson was there, looking very hearty; turned eighty. Your health was drunk with great applause.

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Leeds, August 19th, 1819.

On Sunday I stopped half way on my road to dine with Mr. Fox, to whom I was introduced on Saturday on the grand stand at York, by Mr. Lambton, M.P. for Durham.* You will recollect how nobly he behaved to me at Newcastle. He was consistent here, for I was received (thanks, no doubt, to a friendly hint from him) in the same delightful manner; delightful from its rarity, for there was not even a coqueting hint given all day for "tumbling"†— a small family party of six; and yesterday I

* Now Lord Durham.—A. M.

† Captain Ashe (a celebrated amateur actor, and companionable man) used, when he found himself pressed to amuse in society in any extraordinary way, to call it "tumbling" (*i. e.* being made a mountebank). Dining, for the first time, with my husband, soon after his engagement in London, at a party where a strong desire was hinted that Mr. Mathews

was sent off in a tilbury to "bonny Leeds;" for I stopped at Bramham Park, and sent "Daw" on with the carriage. As far as we have gone he has proved himself by far the most efficient man of business I have had. I got here yesterday at two, and found everything quite ready for performance; and this is no small matter, considering the labour of erecting the "Diligence," and setting appropriate scenery, which George cannot possibly do without at least one labourer; but Daw doffs coat and goes to work like a carpenter; he has no pride. He is as active and clever at the doors as if he had been bred to the trade; in short, from the time I came into Leeds yesterday up to the present hour I have literally not spoken to a creature about the theatre, nor had occasion.

A whimsical equivoque scene took place on Sunday night. I told Daw that the keys of the theatre were in possession of Smith, an impudent sort of *Crack*,* opposite the stage-door, whom you may recollect. An old friend of mine, and a very gentlemanly man, a Leeds merchant, called on me, and saw Daw:—"My name is Smith."—"Oh, you are the very man I wanted to see. Now, the first thing you do, Smith, be sure you go to the music-hall, and get me some branches for candles," &c. You may imagine the rest, particularly as I had told him Smith was an impudent forward fellow, but very useful if kept at a proper distance.

"I dined" (Jack Johnstone—hem!) on Thursday at

would sing a song, Captain Ashe whispered him, in his awful, deep-toned voice: "My good sir, don't you see what they mean? the brutes want you to *tumble* for their amusement."—A. M.

* *Crack*, the name of an eccentric character in the farce of "The Turnpike Gate."—A. M.

the barracks at York, on the invitation of Captain Chatterton, to whom Jones introduced me, and was not asked to sing! The officers had dressed up a monkey in the full dress of the regiment; and he was brought in after dinner, and placed upon the table, and drank a glass of wine, bowing all round. I laughed myself nearly into fits. You may easily imagine the odd effect, with the complete dress (which cost three guineas). When the tail was hid, it was a miniature officer. An Irishman present said, "Colonel Ross brings him upon the table every day, and if you don't immediately give him something to eat he will throw *it* at you." The colonel's servant, a real Dermot, seeing the sun shining powerfully in my face, said, "*Sirr*, if you plaise, does the sun disoblige you? If he does, I 'll be after putting him out of the room."

I am just going to pastoralize with Daw to Kirksdale; to crawl along by the canal, and take a quiet chop there, which will oblige my tongue, and suit my disposition, for I hate "dining out" this hot weather, and to be imprisoned with people who won't walk in the evenings. Oh, how I sigh after my cottage, and you! But I am cheered in my fag with the prospect of the time when I shall have no occasion to quit it again. That I may live to realize that hope, and that you may be preserved to me to share the comfort, is the sincere wish, and nightly prayer of, my dearest wife, your affectionate

C. MATHEWS.

In September Charles relieved his father's mind by his return from Paris, bearing with him two letters, one for Mr. Mathews and another to myself, from Mr. Poole. I insert both, as the

latter is an amusing specimen of that writer's facetious style.

TO CHARLES MATHEWS, ESQ.

Paris, Sept. 3rd, 1819,
Galignani's Library, 18, Rue Vivienne.

My dear Mathews,

Did you ever receive a letter from me dated May 13th, and sent, under cover, to Miller? If you did not, we are both right, and there is as much justice in your long-winded reply as in my "long-winded reproach." If you did, I have the blessing of having the larger share of right on my side; but as the adjustment of the proportions of it is a thing of no very material importance, we may as well throw up the question.

I was greatly surprised at finding the card of "Mr. C. J. Mathews" lying for me at Galignani's, and, with all my respect and regard for "my sincere friend," I must confess I was disappointed.* The "C. *J.*" did not strike me at first; and instead of "Mathews, *fils*," I expected to find "Mathews, *père*," or both; and so near coming, as I find you were, and so pleasant as you might have made your trip, having all your own way, doing as you pleased, staying up as late as ever you could; ordering your own dinner; in short, being your own master, and mine too, in a lawful way. It is exceedingly *aggravoking*, as a Frenchman here said, who was puzzled between *aggravating* and *provoking*. Yet, after all, I was pleased to see Charles, who, by the way, is grown amazingly, and will be a prodigiously tall man. He is already nearly as tall

* Charles, when a child, used to write letters to Mr. Poole, and sign himself his "*sincere friend.*"—A. M.

as I am; and I must mend my pace. It happened rather unluckily, that shortly after Charles's arrival I was engaged to spend eight or ten days with a family in the country, which prevented my having so much of his company as I otherwise should have had. Besides that, he has taken up his residence in the Fauxbourg St. Germaine, at an immeasurable distance from me. As for Mr. Pugin, I like the specimen I have had of him; but, unfortunately, we called two or three times on each other, and just at the times when we happened to be out.

I have nothing new to write you about Paris, everything remaining as you left it. The only remarkable change that has occurred is, that the gay people have taken it into their heads to jump out of garret windows, and that, where the houses are several stories high, is no joke. Two instances of this kind lately occurred on the same day, and within a few paces of each other. They were both women; and one of them went with her infant tied round her waist. Another woman has, within the last week, performed the same experiment, which, though death to the others, has merely cost her both her legs, which were immediately cut off. Charles will tell you all about the Fête St. Louis, and something about the present exhibition at the Louvre, which is a very imposing one. Upon the whole, "my impression" is, that at portrait, landscape, and some departments of sculpture, we beat them out of the field; in the Wilkie style too, of domestic life. In miniature, we are about equal; but on objects of general history we have no chance at competition with them. Our Royal Academy might, perhaps, produce a picture equal to their best, but historical painting is here the fashion, as portrait-painting is with us; and where such is the case, where many artists' am-

bition is to produce a great picture; where praise rather than gain is his object; where success will give him a rank in society, as it certainly will here, though his picture may not produce him four groats, it is clear a general superiority over us in that department must be maintained.

Another interesting part of the exhibition, is the result of French industry, a collection of *every article imaginable*, whether of utility or ornament. Here, I think, we could equal, or even excel them, in a general exhibition (excepting the Gobelins' tapestry, the fine carpets, and the Tours porcelain, painted papier, and bronze and gilt ornaments); but, as we once remarked here, we are too commercial, and have no public spirit, where the arts are concerned. Government does not care about them;—and, speaking of government, what think you of the disturbances in the country? At this distance they have a very frightful aspect; nearer, perhaps, they are less terrific. Will Sir F. Burdett be beheaded? or is that letter falsely attributed to him? There is a pretty specimen of vanity to-day in a Paris paper. Sir R. Wilson's letter to his constituents, dated 27th August, is printed to-day, in French, here. It is impossible this could have been copied in the way of news from an English paper, so that he has translated it, and printed it here himself, where it can be of no earthly use, but to gratify his own vanity. Adieu! Ever sincerely yours,

J. Poole.

To Charles Mathews, Esq.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

(Will be presented by Master C. J. Mathews.)

MY DEAR FRIEND, Paris, Sept. 3rd, 1819.

This letter will be delivered to you by a young gentleman for whom I have a considerable regard; and, as it is likely he will reside some time in England, you will much oblige me by showing him any little attention in your power. I do not wish that you should put yourself to the slightest inconvenience on his account; but merely allow him to make your house his home, and supply him with every necessary of life. That you will allow him bed and board in your house is a thing of course; and the only little extra civility I request of you is, that you will furnish him with clothes and linen, and just be at the trouble of seeing from time to time that they are in good order, and of providing him with the necessary changes and repairs when they are not. I need not request you to pay for his teaching—your good nature and politeness will naturally prompt you to do this; and as to the allowance of a certain sum weekly or monthly, as pocket money, I must remain entirely silent, convinced as I am that your consideration for me will be your best guide as to what is proper in this latter respect. I must, however, observe that he is a young gentleman of sober and discreet habits; and that a hundred or so a year will be nearly as much as he can have occasion for during the first two or three years of his visit to you. If, however, you are of a different opinion, and think this insufficient, I trust to the friendship that exists between us that you will not use the least ceremony, and increase it according to your own notions of what is best. He is intended to pursue the profession of an architect, and is for that purpose placed under the guidance of

a gentleman eminent in the art. My friend Mathews, who has now and then a leisure half-hour at his disposal, will do me the favour to devote it to the examination of my young friend's progress; and I am sure he will be but too happy to defray any little expense that may be incurred in the course of his studies. Need I hint how much I shall feel obliged if he will also just pay the premium requisite for his introduction into the profession? I trust he will not be offended with my mentioning a point so sure of being suggested by his own sense of what is due to a person thus introduced to him. I would not for the world be troublesome to you; and, though I am anxious this young gentleman should meet with a favourable reception at your hands, I do not require more than that you should treat him in all respects as if he were your own son.

Believe me ever, very sincerely yours.

T. Poole.

P.S. By the by he is very fond of riding; and I know he would be delighted if you were to make him a present of a horse. At the same time you would be obliging me by keeping it for him in your stable; you know we are *sans façon*, therefore I SHOULD BE MUCH OFFENDED if you were even to think of keeping a groom to wait entirely on him. He is a young man of the world, and will be perfectly satisfied with the attendance of Mathews's, whenever he may have occasion for him.

And now, having sufficiently introduced my "dear friend" to you, let me ask you a word about yourself. But it is scarcely necessary: Mathews tells me you are perfectly happy in your new residence; as you deserve to be so wherever you are. Mr. Pugin tells me the picture gallery is nearly finished. If Hook be still in town,

pray remember me particularly to him. Do you know that Charles is growing satirical? He called on me one day to ask if I could tell him where he might hire a good horse; but he was so serious about it that I can hardly think he meant any offence.* He has talked about our going together to choose something for you to wear—here we are, however, at the last day before his departure, and we have been no farther than outside the shops. I hope you will admire the hat he has bought for himself; it is in all respects superior to the utensil with which I hoped to astonish all London. I was ashamed of the immense hat I was obliged to buy in London; but when I came here I found it ridiculously small. On the subject of fashion it is interesting to you to know that long waists are getting in; and that this is pretty nearly the appearance of a French lady's walking dress, a view taken behind; and perhaps you 'll allow that a similar one was never taken before. I have omitted eight or ten flounces; "the limits of this advertisement" not allowing for more than I have given, and you may imagine for certain desperate cases about five times more extension of bonnet. It would be improper to represent one of those, as they may be considered incurable. I never go to the play on account of them—one's only chance is in the front row of the upper gallery, because one may see over them. No doubt you have observed at Farrance's a gauze sieve, which serves to protect two or three thousand penny tarts against an incursion of flies. I hate exaggeration, and therefore

† my FINAL *sketch*. This, in addition to its nearer

* Mr. Poole's want of skill on this subject has been described.

† The spaces where the sketches alluded to stood I leave open — these efforts of Mr. Poole's *pen* being intended only, as Doctor Prolix would say, "to make a great laugh *at the time*."—A. M.

approach to truth, is much more highly finished — it is *more a work of art*, and Charles will think better of it. And now, having scribbled long enough to tire you, I will say good b'ye.

God bless you, my dear friend.

Believe me, ever sincerely,

JOHN POOLE.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Leeds, Sept. 6th, 1819.

I received your letter, inclosing Charles's, to-day. I was in Paris, or rather in France nearly three weeks. I spent about thirty pounds from the time I left home till I returned. We posted (only two of us) all the way from London; and instead of living cheaper, by being a family, they appear to me to have been ridiculously extravagant. However, it is too late to complain. I hope Mr. Pugin will not make up his mind, when he takes Charles about with him in England, that I must pay every bill he chooses to make out. There must be some check upon it, or I never can be aware what my expenses are.

I am quite alarmed about your account of John—and of course must conclude, amongst other vices, that he was dishonest, by the word "plunderers." I am determined for the future to leave all these things to you, who are a better judge of human nature than I am. John completely deceived me—he did not you. I confess I soon repented having the family, and am glad they are gone; tell me the worst. I am sorry to lose his dog more than him, because it was a good guard.

Don't let the picture room be coloured till a consultation is held. It is a very important point.

Don't talk of home—you seem to have forgotten Edinburgh, where I am engaged for the 11th of October. Oh, how I long to see home!

I quite delight in your having that faithful creature Cass about you again.

My tongue is certainly better. This week that I feared (notwithstanding two wet nights at Leeds, which did me considerable damage, particularly last night, when it poured exactly at play-time), I have cleared my 100*l.* Bravo!—Little Halifax, all the pit turned into boxes, 60*l.* I have not room to tell you how well "*Daw*" behaved this week—he is *your* recommendation. I will always take your advice.

C. MATHEWS.

CHAPTER IV.

Mrs. Mathews at Leeds.— The Hoaxer hoaxed: A Yorkshire Manager and his Daughter.— Retaliation.— Letter from Mr. Mathews to his Wife.— Reception of the "Scotch Lady" in her native City.—Distressing Dilemma.—Mr. Mathews's Performances at Whitehaven.—An Escape.—Ryley, the Itinerant.

My husband's propensities for hoaxing, not yet extinct, received a considerable check about this time. He had written to me from Leeds, informing me that he should be detained there some time, and hinting that it would give him great satisfaction if I could prevail upon myself to take so long a journey alone, for the purpose of visiting him, in order to reconcile him to a further absence from home, after the tedious one already spent; adding that he should, in any case, be fixed for the next few days at a certain inn at Leeds. In reply, I gave him no hope; but as soon as the letter was despatched, I somehow relented. The notice was brief; but I resolved, without writing again, to give him a surprise; in pursuance of which I drove off to town the next morning, and secured a place in the mail.

I had been assured that I should arrive at Leeds about ten o'clock at night; but, to my great chagrin, when the coach changed horses for the last time, at Wakefield, my remaining fellow-traveller* informed me that it was then twelve! Dispirited with all sorts of vague fears (amongst the rest, that Mr. Mathews, not being apprised of my intention, might have altered his plans and left Leeds,) I became very uneasy.

It was past one o'clock when I was deposited, with my snuff-box of a trunk and my dressing-case, at the door of the inn to which I had directed my last letter, and at which my husband's recent despatch had mentioned his intended stay. The doors, as might be expected, were fastened for the night; and, after vainly attempting to knock up somebody to admit me, my conductor bethought him that there was another entrance at the back of the house, and tapping at the door, a sleepy porter opened it. Now, for the first moment, I felt all the embarrassment of my situation; and when I was asked what I wanted, I hardly knew how to express myself. However, I enquired for Mr. Mathews; and, to my very great relief, found that he was still there—that is, still at Leeds, but not at that moment in the house.—"Mr. Mathews was gone

* Mr. Arbuthnot, of the Treasury, had journeyed part of the way with us.

out to supper." A load was taken from my spirits by this removal of my doubts, and this certainty roused my energies anew. The porter offered to call his "missus," who in a few minutes appeared. The moment she looked at me her manner became repellingly distant—her eyes severe, as they surveyed my disordered and harassed appearance.—"Who, pray," (without even the courtesy of "Ma'am,") "who, pray, do you want?" said the landlady, in a suspicious tone.—"I wish to see Mr. Mathews," said I, faintly.—"Oh—indeed!—well—you come at a strange time of night to see a gentleman," reasonably enough observed the landlady. I acknowledged the truth of this; but said I had come from London. "Did he *know* you were coming?"—"He did not," I replied; "but still I expected to find him here, as it was by his wish that I had taken the journey—and in fact—I was Mrs. Mathews." This avowal, which I thought would settle everything and end the reserve and disrespect of the lady, served only to increase her repulsive manner. "O——h!" cried she, "you *are*, are you?" I was now overpowered at this implied insult, and could not restrain my tears; fatigue and agitation wholly unfitted me for further exertion. This emotion found its way partly to the womanly heart of mine hostess. "Well, well, young woman, I can say nothing to all this, further than that Mr. Mathews is

gone out to supper with some friends — the porter is sitting up for him — and as it is near two o'clock, he can't be long; and therefore, if you like to sit in his parlour till he comes in, you may—and I will call a chambermaid up to remain with you till he returns."

I gladly accepted this offer; and "Betty chambermaid," being roused from her rosy slumbers, came down in a huffy sort of humour, and moved about the "parlour," as if *putting things to rights*, but clearly with the view of seeing what sort of *lady* it was who had appeared at such an unusual hour, and upon such an errand. I really was so worn in body and mind, so exhausted in strength and spirits, that I had lost all power of self-sustainment. At last, finding it impossible to keep my eyes any longer open, I asked to be shown to Mr. Mathews's sleeping-room. After a moment's hesitation, the maid ushered me up to, I believe, the highest room in the house. There, after unpacking my trunk, and undergoing the refreshment of soap and water, I somewhat recovered my faculties, and, while giving instructions to the woman to apprise Mr. Mathews on his return of my arrival, it suddenly occurred to me to ask whether George was gone to bed, regretting that I had not at first inquired for him. The woman stared. I repeated my question, adding the word "*servant*." She said Mr. Mathews had *no* servant. "What then," said I, with some surprise, "is the carriage

gone on?" She did not know—she "supposed" (i. e. was sure) "Mr. Mathews had *no* carriage."—"Oh then, probably he has left it to follow him," I reflected audibly. — She "didn't know." At last she placed the night-lamp on the chimney-piece, and left me.

In a few minutes afterwards, just as I was stepping into bed, she and her mistress (the latter in an undress) dashed hastily into the room, both exclaiming — "Stop, stop! you can't sleep here! you can't sleep here!" "More affronts!" thought I,—"more mortification!" The matter, however, was soon explained. It was true I was in Mr. Mathews's room—but not *the* Mr. Mathews I came to see — but *a* Mr. Mathews! a young traveller for a mercantile house, who "frequented" this inn, and of whom alone they thought when I appeared,—and naturally so, as no other was then domesticated there! Here was the climax to my "misery"— not merely the mistake in which I *might* have been left — dreadful to think of — but the positive wretchedness of finding that my husband was gone!

One solace, however, under my distress was afforded me. The landlady, now seeing the whole affair in its true light, instantly altered her manner, became respectful and kind, and explained the whole mystery of her reserve and distrust. The young man whom she supposed I in-

quired after was a *known bachelor;* and therefore my claim upon him was of course not very charitably construed. She proceeded to account too for my husband's absence. He had, it seems, waited for a return of letters from home; and receiving one from me (the one in which I had given no hope of a compliance with his half-request that I would come to see him), had accepted an invitation to Wakefield for a day or two; and — as it afterwards proved—there saw the last change of horses to the coach wherein I was seated half dead with fatigue and anxiety, as he stood at the door of the inn where he was to sleep!

Here was a situation! I was, however, soon removed to another room. Upon further inquiry, the landlady assured me that she knew Mr. Mathews was to play at Sheffield shortly, and probably had already gone there. She, however, recommended me to stop first at Wakefield, which was the shorter distance and on the road: undertaking to secure me a place in the next day's earliest coach; under which assurance, melancholy as I was, I went to sleep, and with some difficulty was roused the next morning; but found myself, after I had breakfasted, with half an hour upon my hands before the coach was expected.

In the mean time I observed that I was an object of general interest in the house. The escape I had had of surprising the young "*Traveller,*" had caused great tittering amongst the

female part of the establishment, and all wanted to see what sort of a wife he had missed.

I was altogether so vexed with these occurrences, and so *angry* in fact at what, in my ill-humour, I called the *trick* I had been served by my husband, that I meditated on some plan to punish him for it.

It had been a jest for years between us to quote the name of "*Cecilia*," when any little compliment or particular attention had been paid by a female to my husband; in remembrance of rather an awkward position in which he once found himself just before we were married. He had been prevailed upon, by a brother performer in York, to play at Bradford one night, for the benefit of a poor manager with a large family. After the performance, the two York actors invited the *Beneficiaire* to sup with them; and he having expressed himself anxious to hear the *widower's* opinion of his youngest daughter (clearly the flower of the flock), who had acted with him, Mr. Mathews was induced, from kindness to a father's partiality, to say perhaps even more of his daughter's person and talents than he felt due to them. This evidently gratified the poor manager; who, as he sipped his glass, grew more and more elated with the general results of the night, and was full of gratitude and exultation. At last, as the liquor gained the ascendant, it began to *tattle*, and the secret hopes of the father could no

longer be pent within his bosom; for suddenly he slapped the great York actor affectionately and heartily upon the back, exclaiming, in tones of the greatest triumph—"And so, my dear sir, you wish to become my *son-in-law!* — my little *Cecilia* is yours." (!) Mr. Mathews at this was so frightened, that he actually ran out of the room. Sending for Mr. Denman (the person who had induced him to act), he told him that if he did not aid his escape from his determined *father-in-law*, and see that he did not seize upon him, and force him to marry his daughter before he left the town the next day—he'd run away that night, all the way on foot, to York. From that time he neither saw nor heard of his would-be father-in-law nor his little "*Cecilia.*"

This story occurred to me, at the moment, as suitable to my present purpose; and, though, despairing of disguising my hand-writing sufficiently to deceive my husband, I made the attempt. Addressing him as a newly-made widow, and affecting to understand that he was also free to make a second choice—"the writer, remembering his *early attachment* (communicated to her by her revered father), had, after sixteen years, sought him out, with a view of offering him her heart and hand;"—adding the particulars of her arrival at Wakefield in search of him; where she was waiting for his decision, &c. Signed *Cecilia* B. (formerly G——.)

This absurd and really clumsy contrivance I had no expectation could be successful in the least degree; yet I resolved to use it as my introduction to my husband, before I appeared in his presence, believing he would know from whom it came.

When I arrived at Wakefield (too early for Mr. Mathews to be visible, for his habits were like those of his Leeds namesake), I found his man of business already up and writing, in the sitting-room of the inn. His surprise at my arrival over, and the story of my misfortunes related, I told him my intended jest, and showed him the letter, begging him to take it up to Mr. Mathews's room. When he returned, he gave me the following account of his progress.

After knocking at Mr. Mathews's door, and waking him—"I have brought you a letter, Mr. Mathews; delivered to me by a young lady, who says she has just come all the way from London to see you."

"Good God!" exclaimed Mr. Mathews (starting up in affright), "something's the matter with my wife!"

"No, no!" asserted Mr. Adolphus, "No. I ascertained that. The young lady says the letter is from herself, and that she has not seen you for many years."

Here the window curtain was undrawn for the admission of light, and the letter steadily perused.

When the fatal name of "*Cecilia*, late G——h," met his eye, he exclaimed, in a transport of horror, "I won't see her—so go away and tell her so. I never heard of any thing so shamefully impudent in my life!—I won't see her."

"Well; but I can't tell her so," said Mr. Adolphus, "in those words: it will seem so coarse. I assure you she's a very pleasing young lady."

"I don't care *what* she is. Her coming after me is the most impudent thing I ever knew. She is in fact a stranger; and has taken a very great liberty with me. In short, no power on earth shall induce me to see such a woman; and I don't care what she thinks of my refusal.—It's the grossest conduct I ever heard of," &c.; and, in a terrible passion, he ordered Mr. Adolphus out of the room, who came down to me, laughing.

"It was surprising! was he *indeed* deceived? and my hand so ill disguised! Delightful! Well, I think now I'll go up and knock at his door myself."

This I did; and a sullen silence ensued. At length I attempted to enter—the door was *locked!* In short, he resolved to keep it so, till satisfied by Mr. Adolphus that the "obtrusive woman" was gone. I had much ado to make him believe the evidence of his ears, when, in my own voice, I assured him that I was the actual writer and

bearer of the letter; and when at length admitted, and I had explained the trick to him, his delight was proportioned to his previous alarm. He then left me up stairs to change my dress, as he said he expected a lady and gentleman to breakfast, to whom he had promised seats in his carriage that morning as far as Sheffield; and he hurried down to the breakfast room.

It turned out that he had a motive for his haste. His natural love of a hoax, and his high spirits at my arrival, inclined him to turn my trick from himself upon others; and when Mr. and Mrs. Mansel appeared, he put on a grave face, showed them the letter which had so imposed upon himself, and, affecting great embarrassment, added that the person was at that moment up stairs, preparing to join them at breakfast, and that her effrontery was such that no rebuff would have any effect. Nay, he should not be surprised, he said, if the creature persisted to force herself upon Mrs. Mansel, for she had declared she would go in his carriage to Sheffield!

Mrs. Mansel was shocked.—"Was it possible? *could* there be a female so lost to decency as to force herself in such a manner upon a married man? Good heaven! if *Mrs. Mathews* were to hear of it, what a shocking thing it would be," &c.

At this moment, unconscious of what was going on, I descended, and reached the door of the

room, when, to my surprise, my husband opposed my entrance, holding the door a-jar and saying, "Indeed, ma'am, I cannot allow you to come in; it is impossible! Don't you see that I have company? Don't you see that a *lady* is here?" At all which, taking it for a moment's jest — applied to myself, and not "Cecilia," I smiled; and finding him relax in his hold of the door (purposely for me to seem to have forced an entrance), I advanced, with a courtesy, to Mrs. Mansel, whom I had never before seen. To my amazement, this lady sat erect in conscious superiority, trying to awe me with her virtuous frowns. I knew not how to behave at this; and as her looks still pursued me in all the relentless severity of her displeasure, I sank down upon a chair in tears. This roused Mr. Mansel, who had seen me in London, and who had silently humoured Mr. Mathews's plot. He declared it was time to give up the deception, turning to Mrs. Mansel, and assuring her that I was no other than Mrs. Mathews, and that the whole affair was only a jest. This assurance, however, still further excited Mrs. Mansel, who now suspected that her husband was in league with mine, to impose upon her a person whom they found it impossible to shake off, and therefore made the best of for the occasion. The letter was a sad obstacle in the way of their wish to establish my identity; and it was in vain they explained. The lady refused to enter the

carriage with me; and both the gentlemen were in despair how to set me free from the dilemma in which this nonsense had involved me. There I sat, sobbing at the breakfast-table, Mrs. Mansel refusing to approach it, looking daggers at me, and from time to time making efforts to leave the room. Her husband had business of moment at Sheffield; and feeling the inconvenience of losing the only means of proceeding thither in time, at last grew angry. But nothing moved his rigid wife: she would not submit to take a seat by the side of "the creature." The time for the journey had arrived; the carriage at the door. Mr. Adolphus and George had been hurried off before the scene began, by the only coach going, in order to make room for me and Mrs. Mansel, so that their evidence, unluckily, was not available; but both gentlemen pledged themselves to Mrs. Mansel that on our arrival in Sheffield she should receive indisputable proof of who I really was. Well, at last she was induced, by dint of the anger and entreaties of her husband, to enter the carriage, which would hold only three persons, my husband getting upon the box to accommodate Mr. Mansel, who sat between his wife and myself, looking like Garrick between tragedy and comedy, not knowing to which to be most civil. It would have been diverting to an indifferent witness to observe the suspicious side-long glances of Mrs. Mansel, and tossings of the

head at me during this journey. She had remarkably large eyes, which were on the stretch the whole time, and darting haughty disdain upon the person with whom she was thus, in a manner, forced to breathe the same air; while I sat humiliated and embarrassed; my poor husband looking back from his seat very often, with a half-smile, at Mrs. Mansel's dignity, and in anxious observance of my mortification, every now and then stretching his hand out to me, and pressing mine encouragingly, an act that never failed to raise Mrs. Mansel's ire anew. When we stopped on the road for the horses to be refreshed, Mrs. Mansel got out, and Mr. Mathews took her place for a few minutes. On her return, finding him sitting with his arm round my waist, there was another struggle on her part to be left behind, and to be allowed to wait for a coach; but again she was persuaded to endure the contamination of my presence; and the same repelling looks and obdurate silence were resumed, while my tears and sobs continued to distress the gentlemen. Here was a good lesson for the hoaxer; and I believe my husband felt it such, for he was truly mortified. At last we reached Sheffield, and found Mr. Adolphus waiting at the inn door, who accosted me as "Mrs. Mathews," and hoped that I had brought *Cecilia* with me; while George took off his hat with a smile at seeing his mistress. All this was *evidence;* and the hitherto relentless

lady seized me by the hand, led me rapidly into the inn, and closing the door, burst into a flood of generous and repentant tears, and begged me to forgive her incredulity and insults. Of course, all this made us very merry when it was over; and Mrs. Mansel thought it due to me to be doubly fond, in order to pay to *Mrs. Mathews* the kindness she had refused to *Cecilia.*

The whole of this visit to my husband was, in fact, very dramatic, if I had the power in the relation to do it justice. But though it caused much after-merriment, it also sickened my husband for a long while of all kinds of hoaxing; but "the snake was scotched, not killed."

After a sojourn of some days in my favourite county, I took leave of my husband, and returned home.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Newcastle, October 4th, 1819.

I had 53*l.* at Durham. Part of the Pit laid into the Boxes. Mrs. Siddons was there; and I dined in her company at Dr. Haggit's, Prebendary of the Cathedral. Count Boruwlaski, dear fellow, was on the look-out for me with open arms. He begged I would imitate him; and I did; he was in the theatre. I never heard louder shouts. I walked about the streets with him yesterday morning, with his hand in mine, like a child. We called on Colonel Light, whom we met at Chisholme's. He was ill. The Count said, it was a pity, for he was "a fine

body," and his wife "a sweet body." It is an undoubted fact, that the count has lately grown an inch, though eighty-one years of age! I measured him years ago: he was certainly only three feet three inches. I measured him yesterday, and he was *as* certainly three feet four. He said "Oh, I grow; in five hundred year I am so big as you. I will be grenadier." He told me I was a "wonderful devil." I wish you could have seen us walking together, and that 's the long and short of it.*

Durham is a most hospitable place. I returned there on Tuesday, and dined, *en famille*, quite in my own way, with Colonel and Mrs. Light. The little Count came in the evening, and a Major "Whaticum." They are very agreeable people, after my own heart. I dined also with Stephen Kemble, and had a very pleasant day there. I took Daw with me. On Wednesday, the day of my second performance, I dined again with Dr. Haggit. Mrs. Siddons was staying there; — evident symptoms of pleasing at the first visit. I had another instance here of the remarkable coincidence we have all of us witnessed, of the resemblance which the voice and manner of one person bears to another. The Doctor's likeness to Mr. Laforest struck me at the first sight, but never in my life did I hear one voice so like another. I am confident he might pass for him at any city party. Delicious people, and no desire for exhibition. Not a "Jacky Showbeast" among them. My two nights here have produced me 157*l.*! making, since last Saturday, 237*l.*! Beyond the "right reading" again. I hope to hear of you on Sunday morning at Edinburgh, and that you and our dear boy

* This charming little creature had long been resident at Durham, where he had a beautiful romantic cottage and grounds, which he called "Little Poland."—A. M.

are well, for I have been cruelly depressed these two or three days, and have tortured myself with the usual ingenuity of hypochondria, that all has not been well with you. God bless you, and my dear good boy, prays

CHARLES MATHEWS.

The next letter gives a very gratifying account of the reception of the "Scotch Lady" in her native city.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Edinburgh, Oct. 20th, 1819.

I am going on famously here. I gave my Trip on Wednesday. It would have done your heart good to hear the roars at the "Scotchwoman;" the success of which I rather doubted here. It is the greatest hit I ever made anywhere in that part. Bless their good-natured hearts! It was repeated on Thursday and last night (Friday). I netted the last night about 180*l.* At the words "he was a vary goodnatured body," which I hit happily, they gave me a thundering round of applause, which swelled into a hurrah, and the cheering at the close was delicious. To-morrow my benefit: *all* the boxes taken — the *Trip* again. My week will give me 300*l.*

All the world are here.—'T is the Musical Festival. I heard a very charming concert last night in the theatre—Braham, Miss Stephens, Ambrogetti, Begrez, &c., and the instrumental department very perfect indeed.

A curious circumstance: — I received a letter (which I will preserve) from a Methodist preacher here, last week, to say he was a pastor of a congregation who could not afford to purchase a Bible, and requesting me to

make a present of one; and I have done so! I made a condition that the following inscription should be upon it: "The Gift of Charles Mathews, *Comedian.*" It is finished, and will be announced to the Elect next Sunday!

CHARLES MATHEWS.

In a subsequent letter he says:

I inclose you the letter of my Methodist correspondent. To-morrow my Bible is to be sported in the pulpit, and the congregation informed who gave it.

TO C. MATHEWS, ESQ.

DEAR SIR, Oct. 12, 1819.

I hope you will pardon the liberty which I take in writing to you. But the fact is this, I knew your father well, and yourself some years ago heard me preach at the Adelphi Chapel, London. I am an Englishman, and at present supplying a congregation at Leith, most of them very poor people. We are in want of a Bible for our pulpit; and if you will have the goodness to present us with one, I should esteem it a singular favour, and as long as I live will bear you in my remembrance as a gentleman and a humane character; and I am sure my poor friends would esteem it a mark of the greatest kindness.

I remain, dear Sir,

Your very humble and obedient Servant,

THOMAS WESTON.

At Mr. Rose's, Syms' Dry Dock, Leith.

I shall here introduce a brief and unimportant communication, only to show how highly the writer estimated disinterested social kindness,

and how bitterly he felt the discovery of any motive for attentions which afterwards resolved themselves into a sinister requisition of the talents that he set apart for the public. Whenever he found himself treated with proper consideration his gratitude exceeded all bounds, his thankfulness became attachment for the person who so sought him, and the consequence was sure to be to the advantage of those present; for his entertaining qualities were elicited by the very certainty he felt that he was not called upon for any particular exhibition of them, and would arise naturally, and almost without his being conscious of their exercise.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Dupplin Castle, Oct. 28th, 1819.

I have been here at Lord Kinnoul's since Saturday afternoon. He is one of the kindest men I ever saw, and has no desire for exhibition. The first day I was here, on my former visit, we dined only four altogether, and nothing "*amusing*" was ever hinted at. It is a magnificent old house, situated in a most romantic country;—most richly wooded, notwithstanding Dr. Johnson's assertions. The scenery by which the house is surrounded has much the character of South Wales. I never was at any house where I have been made more at home.

C. MATHEWS.

The following description of a distressing dilemma, which occurred to him on the road to

Dumfries, is at once a specimen of the great inconvenience Mr. Mathews sometimes encountered, and of the fortitude which on every important occasion he exhibited. The fretfulness which, as he observes, "the loss of an old slipper" would produce, never appeared under misfortunes of a graver cast, — there he was really a philosopher. The only occasion that I can remember under which his mental and physical faculties forsook him was in the overwhelming remorse he felt at having so rashly destroyed, by his obligation to Mr. Arnold, all future power to render those he loved independent of the world, in the event of his quitting it before them; an event which, in the course of nature, might be supposed certain — alas! too certain. Let the painful drawback to personal exertion by his lameness be remembered, and his determined activity will add grace to his behaviour under such circumstances as the following:—

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Dumfries, Nov. 19th, 1819.

Did you happen to think of me on Tuesday night, about seven o'clock! And did it happen to blow a hurricane at Highgate, as it did in Dumfries-shire? If you could by possibility have taken a peep at me about that moment, or any one similarly situated who was even indifferent to you, you must have screamed at the sight. We had proceeded from Glasgow to within seven miles of Moffat, where we

proposed to stay for the night, on our way to this town. There had been a deep snow of three hours' continuance, which was succeeded by a most tremendous storm of wind and rain. Daw was lulled to sleep, and I was thinking of you know who, and enjoying my home in perspective, when I was roused from my reverie by frequent warnings from our postilion, as I imagined, to some drivers of carts to keep on their own side. Suddenly a tremendous concussion shook me directly off my seat, and threw me upon Daw, and in an instant the carriage broke down. George literally shrieked; and, on lifting his head from under an umbrella, where he had crouched to protect himself from the storm, felt it instantly ascend (not his head!—the umbrella) with the force of the wind, and found himself lying in the road before he could account for the cause of his sudden removal. As the body of the carriage lay upon the axletree, and the head was up, it was some time before we could scramble out. My first thought was to discover the cause of our misery; and I sent George after the carts —there were about seven or eight without drivers! You may imagine our horrors. The concussion was so forcible that the front spring was forced quite out of its situation, two yards from the carriage, without being broken. Every bolt that attached it to the axletree was completely broken off, and there was apparently no possibility of its being moved from the spot. We were holding a council, when two men came up to inquire the nature of the damage. Luckily for myself, perhaps, I was not aware that they were two of the scoundrels belonging to the carts, who had been drinking whisky at a toll-bar about three hundred yards further on. They pronounced that the carriage could not be moved till repaired. Seven miles from any house but the toll-bar!—pouring, blowing—standing up

to our ankles in wet — a frightfully bleak and mountainous country! Imagine our despair. We were for a few minutes unmanned and deprived of energy, and totally at a loss what course to pursue. It was too dark to ascertain the extent of our damage; and, for the first time since we had been out, George had forgot the candles for our lamps. I proposed (poor limp!) to run to the toll-bar. The driver, finding his horses very fidgetty, proposed taking them off, to prevent further mischief. In two minutes after, off they set, full gallop, towards Moffat, he of course after them. Here we were, deprived of his assistance. I reached the toll-bar, a mud hovel; inquired for ropes — not one, not even a bit of string. I gave a strong hint to Toll-trap to afford some assistance to drag the carriage to the gate. He had a friend with him; but neither offered to move. I borrowed a lantern — three times, in my way to the carriage, the wind blew out the light, and almost my breath too. Since our Irish voyage, I have seen no such night. At last I reached the carriage; and found, with four of us, all that could be hoped would be to get it to the toll-bar. Daw propped up the body with his shoulder, I trundled the wheel that had been deprived of its proper action by the removal of the axletree, and George and the two rascals dragged the pole; for, as the horses were having a bit of fun by themselves, we had not their assistance. After a good deal of labour, we got it to the toll-house: by this time we were soaked. The horses were at length caught and brought back, looking very foolish. At last it was settled that I was to ride one of the post-horses into Moffat, send a chaise with a smith, and ropes and bolts, and bring back Daw, who was left in the wretched hovel to wait its return, and guard the property. You may fancy my ride:

up mountains and down again—alternate sleet, snow, and pouring rain — a stumbling old cart-horse, for he was no better. Oh, that I could bear the removal or loss of an old slipper with the temper I bore this misfortune! Here I rose superior to Daw, who is one of the cool tribe, and to George, one of the indifferent. At the top of a hill one mile long, and equal to the steepest part of Highgate, a sudden gust blew my horse out of his course. I was in spirits at having escaped so well, and caught myself at my old resource — a child — and cried, "O cry! what fun!" and immediately burst out laughing at the absurdity of my own ridiculous behaviour. I reached Moffat in safety, drenched to the skin, and did not discover till I had arrived that I had forgotten my hat, and had rode all the way in my cap which I put on when the head of the carriage is up. I put on some clothes of the landlord's (who is nearly the size of Wiggens), and, in an hour after my arrival, was seated by a large fire, with a good beef-steak and some whisky punch. Daw arrived at twelve, and the carriage, with George, the smith, &c. at one o'clock. The coughs of the two poor victims with me make me most thankful for my extraordinary constitution. Not the slightest inconvenience have I suffered. I am perfectly well, the carriage is repaired, and all right but a pair of old boots that were obliged to be cut off my legs with a knife — and Daw's umbrella, which we *suspect* to be the one seen on the coast of Aberdeen, going towards the coast of Holland.

CHARLES MATHEWS.

Burns died here. A very handsome mausoleum has been erected over his remains, and a statue by Turnerelli. I called on his widow to-day, and introduced myself to her. She received me with very good manners. She is a

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comfortable body, in a very neat little house. All the family are provided for. I saw the only portrait of him.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Whitehaven, Nov. 24th, 1819.

My miseries are nearly over, I believe,—they were only "miseries,"* excepting the break-down. I have not had one failure of attraction, excepting Glasgow; but the loss of time, the horrible distances I have had to go, through misinformation, bad information, and want of information, have been almost too much to bear. Then, I have been *had* twice by managers (imposed upon), &c. I played one night for nothing at Montrose for the use of all the managers' theatres. He had *three*, and I was told he had six. In one he was acting himself, which I understood I was to play in. Instead of that (*good* fellow!) he marches me off to a place where he had no company, leaving these at one of the three; by which he left me *one* theatre Aberdeen. "I thought I was to have Arbroath?"—"Yes, sir, but my company is there. Happy to give you half the house."—"Perth?"—"Why, sir, that is repairing." Then Mr. Mason would not let me have Glasgow under 30*l.* per night! A friend "could have told me, had he known how to send to me, that I must be mortified if I came to Glasgow: failures to the greatest amount ever known in one year; twenty thousand poor out of employment; radical meetings." When Kean was there a fortnight before, not a name in the box-book all the time; a few took places, but

* In allusion to the "Miseries of Human Life."—A. M.

with initials. He played to 30*l.* and 40*l.*, and left at the end of his sixth night, though engaged for twelve.

C. MATHEWS.

The following letter contains an account of another escape which Mr. Mathews was destined to experience, "by flood and field."

TO MRS. MATHEWS

Liverpool, Nov. 29th, 1819.

I wish Daw and George may live out the journey. I am fated to live with coughing subjects—two such victims! What a fortunate fellow *I* am! another escape! two indeed!

There were great advantages held out to me in coming from Whitehaven by water:—140 miles by land—mountains of Cumberland almost impassable in frosty weather—bad road—post-horses scarce—only eight hours' daylight—two long days on the road. By sea:—about half-way—safe passage—constant traders—do it in twelve hours—save ten pounds. It was agreed! Daw always looking blank—Saturday morning, fair wind—Fishing-smack hired on purpose—carriage "pood aw to bits"—put on board—wretched-looking vessel—no cabin or beds—deep fog came on—felt a horror—longed to say I won't go—recollected Captain Skinner saying, "Never afraid of anything at sea but a fog. However, desperate courage—made up my mind. Daw was already seated, wrapped up, looking like a melancholy watchman; I had just got the hand of a friend in mine, saying, "farewell!" and was descending nineteen stone steps, from the pier into the vessel, with a heavy heart, when crack went the foremast, and she broke

off close to the deck. The act of hawling up the foresail had finished this ricketty mast. But for this providentially happening in the harbour, the vessel must have gone at sea, and the consequence, if not fatal, would at all events have been misery.

The carriage was unshipped. Started at twelve o'clock instead of seven: we commenced our land journey, which, but for the escape, would indeed have been miserable. Deep fog — roads like glass — horses slipping, one foot forward, the other back — and a hundred and forty miles before us. Still we were as merry as grigs: I did not know how to contain my joy. "Please to remember the boat," was our watchword when any little misery occurred. We made, spite of all impediments, fifty-six miles that night, but almost starved to death. Yesterday morning started at seven; and going out of Burton, about ten o'clock, down a hill, both horses fell, and the driver lay under them. The first effect was terrific. *We* were all unhurt — carriage and all. Other horses were procured, and another driver; and, after a long, cold, dreary journey, arrived here at ten last night, and were *expected* — good fires, good beds, my old lodging. All troubles and miseries appear to be over.

Write in as good spirits as your last—it does me good.

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Manchester, Dec. 7th, 1819.

I have just arrived here from Liverpool, where I stayed to do a good action last night, and avoided a "misery" which poor Daw had all to himself. I had sent him forward with the carriage; and, when within a mile of

Manchester, the tire of the hind wheel came off, and he was about an hour doing the mile — *as usual*, in the dark and raining.

Poor old Ryley, penniless and melancholy as usual, was ready for me on my arrival, and solicited me to *do something* for him after I had finished at the Theatre. Incledon also arrived, and sang three songs. So last night I did two acts of the "Mail Coach," and old "*Trist*"* and Charley both exhibited, to the tune of 100*l.* in the Music Hall; so "the Itinerant"† was in luck! "God bless the good people of Liverpool." I sent off 250*l.* to Stephenson, instead of the two hundred I promised to you.

And now, as I have got to dine and act to-night (for I could not afford to lose a night by my charity, therefore stole it out of my lungs), you must excuse my brevity.

C. MATHEWS.

* One of the names he gave to Mr. Ryley; from whose peculiar temperament he took the character so called.—A. M.

† The title of Mr. Ryley's autobiography.—A. M.

CHAPTER V.

Mr. Mathews again "At Home."—Country Cousins.—Address to the Audience.—Analysis of the Performance, and Genius of Mr. Mathews.—Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd.—Letters of Mr. Mathews.—Mr. Wilton, the East Indian Chesterfield.—Popularity of Mr. Mathews's Entertainments, and Presents to propitiate Puffs.—Whimsical Alarms.—Anecdote.

THE time now approached for his reappearance in London; and on the 28th of February 1820, Mr. Mathews was again "At Home," and again was equally successful. His "Country Cousins," whom he now introduced, were welcomed to town with a warmth which detained them there until the close of the season in unabated favour when they retired with the rest of the London fashionables. The following was the announcement:—

The Public are respectfully informed that they will again find
MR. MATHEWS AT HOME*
At the Theatre Royal English Opera House, Strand, on Monday next, February 28th, 1820; when he will have the honour to commence his Annual Course of Lectures on Character, Manners, and Peculiarities, by introducing his Friends to his
COUNTRY COUSINS*
AND THE SIGHTS OF LONDON.

* By James Smith, Esq.—A. M.

PART FIRST.—London Cousins.—Country Cousins.—Yorkshire Cousins (Mr. Mathews's).—Their Names and Descriptions.—Aunt Agatha.—Her last Despatches from Whitby.

Song—*Country Commissions.*

Sudden Incursion of the Goths from the North, viz. Aunt Agatha, Cousin Dolly, Cousin Jerry, Uncle Baffin, with Zachary Flail their Appendix.—Characters introduced: Sir Hubble Bubble and Doctor Prolix.—Tale of a *Tail.*—Gas *versus* Oil.—St. Dunstan's Church.—A Buck Attorney.—Wager of Battle.—Chapter Coffee-house.—Loquacious Waiter.

Song—*White Horse Cellar.*

Monsieur de Tourville.—Garrick and Wilkes.—Dr. Prolix's Tale of a Head.—St. Paul's.—Queen Anne.—Bird Statuary.—Wren Architect.—Verger and Reverberation.—Tremendous Notice from the Whispering Gallery.—Bird's-eye View of London.

Song—*O what a Town, what a wonderful Metropolis.*

Panoramic Prospect.—St. James's Park.—Chelsea.—Greenwich.—Palaces.—Hospitals.—Bow Church.—Newgate.—Fleet Prison.—Lincoln's Inn.—Alderman's Walk.—College of Physicians.—Bedlam.—Winter Theatres.—Jerry's Digression.

Song—*Epsom Races.*

PART SECOND.—Moulsey Hurst.—Pugilism.—*Song: The Mill (Anglicè, A Fight).*—Country Cousins.—Carried to the Monument.—Cast Iron Southwark Bridge.—Catastrophes of Velocipedes.—Dr. Rumfoozle and Mrs. Inicumpip.—Incipient Prosecutions.—Exhibition at Somerset House.—Sir Hubble Bubble and the Hanging Committee.—Zachary Flail's Disasters.—Mock Auctions.

Song—*Zachary Flail's Description of London.*

Panorama of the North Pole.—My Uncle's Bay, *id est* Baffin's Bay.—Dr. Prolix on Nose Pulling.—Westminster Abbey.—Indictment at .... Sessions: Rex *versus* Patrick O'Row.—Justice Metaphor.—Counsellors Prim and Moonshine.—A Countess's Letter to a Comedian, and his proposed Answer.—Invitation of the Country Cousins to a Fashionable Rout.

Song—*The Rout, or Lady Fidget at Home.*

Failure of Gossamer and Goosetrap, Country Bankers.—Northern Invasion subsides.—Goths driven back to Whitby.—Adieu to London.

Finale—*Now Farewell to Bagatelle.*

PART THIRD.—Exhibition of the Multiplication Table during a Christmas at Brighton.—Solution of the Mysteries of Four Times Five, by the juxta-position of the following Figures, viz.

Alderman Huckaback, in the Chair (surfeited).
Tabitha, his Maiden Sister at the Table (studious).
Snap, one of the Livery.
Signor Canzonetti, Singing Master.
Miss Matilda Huckaback, his Pupil.
Molly Magog, a Patagonian Nurse.
Methusalem, a Youthful Watchman.
Dicky Gossip, a Posthumous Barber.

The whole being embodied and animated by Mr. Mathews.

The Piano Forte by Mr. E. Knight.

Mr. Mathews prefaced his new Entertainment by the following Address:—

"Ladies and Gentlemen,

"This being the third Season in which I am gratified by appearing 'At Home' before you, I am naturally reminded of the renowned Whittington, who, as you all know, enjoyed the delight of being thrice Lord Mayor of London. His fame was founded on a lucky cat—mine on a lucky hit. It was his department to banish *mice*, 'tis mine to banish *melancholy*. Why he was satisfied with being merely thrice Lord Mayor of London we are not told; perhaps the accumulation of custard upon his stomach rendered him unfit for the further fatigues of office. That—*ecce signum!*—is not my case. Neither will this,

my third Election, satisfy an ambition that pants for

'Thrice again, to make up nine.'

It is therefore my intention, should I by your suffrages be re-elected to this comic chair, so to conduct myself, as to drive all Blue Devils out of the Strand from eight till eleven o'clock—to bind *Heigh-ho* over to good behaviour—and to place Ha! Ha! Ha! those three graces of speech, on that proud and palmy pinnacle to which their virtues and talents authorize them to aspire. It is my intention during the present evening to communicate the adventures which befell me in exhibiting some of the Sights of London to my Country Cousins.

"Before I enter upon my task, permit me, however, to utter a few words in explanation of the epithet *imitation*, or, as it is sometimes in carelessness, and sometimes in hostility, called, *mimicry*. I look upon this talent when applied to the body, to be what satire is when applied to the mind.

"If the satirist drags forth private and innocuous frailties to public view, he sinks into a lampooner. If the imitator outrages private feelings by holding up incurable and unpresuming personal defects to public ridicule, he degenerates into a buffoon. It is my purpose to evince, by *general* delineations, how easily peculiarities may be acquired by negligence, and how difficult they are to eradicate when strengthened by habit; to show how often vanity and affectation steal upon the deportment of youth, and how sure they are to make their possessor ridiculous in after life; in short, to exemplify the old adage, that 'No man is contemptible for being what he is, but for pretending to be what he is not.'

"Now, then, for my Cousins."

I will here introduce some of the evidences of

the general esteem with which these *Relations* of my husband were received by the public.

We have been to see Mr. Mathews, and been introduced to his "Country Cousins," Aunt Agatha, Uncle Baffin, &c. The party (whose object it was to see the Sights of London) was joined by some other friends of his, to wit, Sir Hubble Bubble, Dr. Prolix, another gentleman (we do not remember his name,) whose talent lies in being fatigued, and the apposite patronymic of Monsieur de Tourville. Our new acquaintances hastened to justify the character given of them. Monsieur de Tourville is a French gentleman on his travels, who puts down memoranda of everything he hears, with a knowledge of the language edifyingly incompetent. He is at the same time very particular in begging people to repeat their information, in order that he may be correct. Thus the mention of the word "canons" at St. Paul's startles him; but on finding the word repeated, he puts implicit faith in the "orthodox artillery," and sets it down in his tablets, that St. Paul's Church is well provided with *cannon*. His French-English is also very entertaining. He is *charmed of you to see*. He takes up his *legs and arms* (quarters) at the Sabloniere; and of a picture or landscape he says, that it is a striking *blow of the eye* (*coup d'œil*). The fatigued gentleman's faculty consists in being perpetually tired of *Dr. Prolix's* stories, and in having one idea upon them; which is, that they will "wear him to a thread-paper." Whenever the Doctor commences one of his new old anecdotes, he makes his pathetic but vain appeal,—"There he goes again—consider, for God's sake, sir—you'll wear me to a thread-paper." The Doctor's narrative powers may be guessed accordingly. He is an effete old gentleman, with a small attenuated voice;

and commences every anecdote with saying, "When I was a young man," and declaring it excellent. He then goes elaborately through some old joke, and on finding it does not take, declares that "it made a great laugh at the time." *Sir Hubble Bubble* was the more amusing to us, because we think we have seen his likeness somewhere. He is a sort of good-natured bully, or rather fop, who affects decision and straightforwardness; and, uniting a hurried manner with pomposity, rolls his shoulders and his voice about, with a deep guttural indistinctness. He swallows his words half-done. There is a brisk young lawyer of the party, who perplexes the inexperience of his father, *Baffin*, with facetious translations of Latin inscriptions, and by calling out at every turn, "Go it, if it kills you." *Baffin* is extremely meek and lack-a-daisical; all his remaining strength in life seems concentrated in shaking hands with his cousins, and hoping to see his accomplished son Jerry *in the Bench*,—meaning *upon* it. *Aunt Agatha* is a bustling old housewife, who agitates her town kinsman with long letters from the country, full of impossible commissions. She requests him, for instance, to buy her something in Long-acre; and *when he is there*, to attend to a job in Cornhill; and *when he is there*, to get some long soap for her in Clerkenwell; and *when he is there*, not to forget the skein of white worsted from Flint's, near Cranbourn-alley. The commission for the worsted is repeated twice in the course of the letter; and the following postscript is added:—"I will thank you to get me a skein of white worsted from Flint's." In the Third Part, Mr. Mathews presents us with a scene in a Court of Justice; at which he is eminently happy.

Foote, the great ancestor in the line of this worthy descendant, having run through two fortunes and come into a third, mounted a carriage, and took for his motto,

"*Iterum, iterum, iterumque.*" Such may be the motto of Mr. Mathews, whose third season seems to promise a fortune equal at least to either of those which have preceded it.

In the course of the rambles of the *Country Cousins* they are joined by *Monsieur de Tourville*, a French traveller, come to "take the *tower* (tour) of London," who makes a multitude of whimsical blunders. They encounter (and these characters are represented before the audience) a waiter at the Chapter Coffee-house, a verger of St. Paul's, and several other oddities. They visit St. Paul's, whence a panoramic view and description of the Monument, the Cast-iron Bridge, the Exhibition at Somerset-house, the Panorama of the North Pole, and a fashionable rout given by the Countess of Fidget. Accounts of a pugilistic *Mill*, of Epsom Races, of the White Horse Cellar, of a Mock Auction, of an Indictment at the Sessions, &c. are introduced, and given with admirable spirit. Of the fun and pun it is impossible to recollect a hundredth part. The jests which have the quality of antiquity are made so new and diverting by the mode of telling them, that they are as good as if we had never heard them before: the new jokes are many of them so excessively ridiculous, that we cannot resist them on that score, while others please by being epigrammatic, quaint, and witty. For example, we have rhyme to Dioastrodoxon; Quin's advice to a person who had suffered an indignity, to wear his *nose soaped*, told by *Prolix* and ascribed to Lord Chesterfield; and, in short, a crowd of modern follies brought under a review of the most spleen-killing description, mixed up with recollections of many older drolleries, in fascinating medley.

The concluding Part, however, displays the abilities of

Mr. Mathews in a way still more astonishing than the two preceding. In this, by means of pasteboard figures, which are moved by springs, and which he in turn animates by *inserting* himself into them without being perceived, he actually manages to have two, three, or four characters upon the stage at the same moment — in fact, he acts, alone, a complete farce; and sustains to admiration the parts of *Alderman Huckaback; Tabitha*, an old maid; *Snap*, a servant; *Canzonetti*, a singing-master; *Miss M. Huckaback*, his pupil; *Molly Magog*, an old nurse, (shorter than himself by the legs, for he plays this part on his knees); *Methusalem*, an old watchman; and *Dickey Gossip*, a barber. This arduous task he performs with a degree of rapidity and skill truly astonishing, and he often takes the audience completely by surprise, bursting upon them in a new shape, and from a new quarter, when they feel quite certain he has remained all the time before them in some character previously assumed.

The following notice of Mr. Mathews's Entertainment this year,* is so well written, and agrees so perfectly, in one respect, with my husband's feelings, that I think it well to add it to other remarks upon his powers and pretensions as an actor.

It is the fashion for those who pretend to admire the art of acting, at the same time to depreciate the art of imitation; as if it did not require the very same powers, both intellectual and bodily, and the very same discipline of those powers, to succeed in the one as in the other; and as if, therefore, the very best imitator in the world were not ne-

* Blackwood's Magazine.

cessarily the very best actor in the world—in short, as if they were not one and the same thing. We have little scruple in following this general proposition—for we put it as such—wherever it may lead; and in asserting that Mr. Mathews is the very best actor on the English stage at this day, we shall of course not be suspected of meaning to say that he ever can reach, or that he ever could have reached, the lofty tragedy of Kean, the pure nature of Dowton, or the ineffable farce of Liston. But we do say that he can embody an infinitely greater variety of characters than either of those actors; and, consequently, that his physical powers must be more plastic than theirs, more under the command of his will, and his intellectual resources more various, and more immediately available to him. Besides, in these actors it is always the tragedy of Kean, the nature of Dowton, the farce of Liston;—but in some of Mr. Mathews's performances it would be actually impossible to detect him, unless one knew beforehand it *was* him—for it is the thing itself. This is true, without any exaggeration, of the *Old Scotchwoman* in particular, and also of many other parts of his performance. It is idle and invidious to attempt to distinguish this kind of acting from any other, by calling it *mimicry*. Who thinks of calling Wilkie's pictures mimicry?—And what are they but just representations of individual character and habit, under peculiar circumstances? And what does it require to produce them but plastic bodily powers working under the direction of a mind possessed of a fine talent for general observation, and an exquisite tact for discrimination between that which is common and essential to a class, and that which is peculiar to a particular individual of that class. And these are precisely the qualities which Mr. Mathews possesses in common with all other successful actors—only, as it appears to us, in a still more striking and extraordinary degree.

We are confirmed in this opinion by what we have heard related of Mr. Mathews by those who are acquainted with him in private life. There, when he chooses to exhibit his peculiar powers at all, the effect of them is still more striking. In public he is necessarily compelled to confine himself to that which is "set down for him." But in private, when he throws himself into the manner and habit of another person, he at the same time absolutely throws himself into his mind and character. He feels and thinks and says, as well as acts, as they would inevitably do under the same circumstances: not as he recollects they *have done*, but as he knows, as it were intuitively, that they *would do*. If we had not been told this, we should have guessed it from what we have seen of his performances in public; for they have always struck us as a very extraordinary instance of the plasticity of the human mind and frame, and we have paid particular attention to them accordingly. In fact, to those who have looked so closely into Mr. Mathews's performances as we have done, we need not scruple to say that his powers in this respect amount to nothing less than *genius*. In short, it cannot be denied with any semblance of truth that his performances combine, in a most extraordinary degree, the mental and physical qualities of almost all actors and acting.

It will appear by the next letter, that the Ettrick Shepherd had at one time some idea of contributing to Mr. Mathews's "Entertainments."

TO FRANCIS ANDERSON, ESQ. JUN.

My dear Frank, Altrive Lake, March 1st, 1820.

I have always looked upon Mrs. McKnight's Original Stories as truly inimitable;* and as soon as I got your letter

* In allusion to the *Scotch Lady*.

I gave up the idea of being able to comply with your request, and very stupidly forgot to answer you. You know how happy I am always to oblige you, and there is nothing I would not try for such an ingenious original as Mr. Mathews; but truly and honestly I have little chance of success. If I can produce aught that pleases me, I will send it; but do not harass me should it not arrive, for then be sure I have failed.

I am yours ever, most affectionately,

JAMES HOGG.

The following letters were addressed to me by my husband during a stay at Brighton, where the ill health of Charles required me to take him during his father's season in town :—

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Highgate, April 7th, 1820.

I never received a letter from you that was more welcome than that of to-day. Yesterday I arose with a fit of blues; and when the postman arrived with a most uninteresting note from another, instead of a letter from *you*, I was finished for the day.

Your cheerful letter, however, has put me in spirits again; and I rejoice most fervently at the happy account you give of Charles. By no means come away till you can pronounce him perfectly recovered in health — so desirable to us all, and so necessary to my happiness. I am very melancholique, but I can make up my mind to at least another week.

Sir Walter* is coming to breakfast with me on Sunday.

* Sir Walter Scott.

If I had had a bumper on Monday, I should have written to tell you of it. Easter Monday is the worst night of the year, if fine. I had about 140*l.* and the greater proportion dress and private boxes. Neither Covent Garden nor Drury Lane paid their expenses; nor can we expect such houses as last year. I am confident, however, that when the town fills, which it will in a fortnight, we shall much improve.

My oracle, Peake, thinks, under all circumstances (and looking at the prospect) that we are doing very well.

Our neighbour ——— dined with me yesterday, and I drove him to the Lyceum* and back. I said my catechism to him, like a good boy. I told him Liston *was* funny off the stage — and paint does *not* destroy actors' complexions — and that Munden *is* an old man — and agreed with him that Dowton *is* "a very fair actor"— and told him where the actors went to when they "retired from the scene." By the by, he has no doubt in his own mind that Warren *employs* people to write his name on the walls!!!

The rain has been worth 37*l.* 10*s.* to the garden. It is looking delightfully; and the lawn has been rolled and mowed—and all that sort of thing.

It was very pretty in the King to ask you to tea—and I hope you will tell him I think so. Such little attentions must destroy all Radical feeling, if it existed.

CHARLES MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Highgate, April 10th, 1820.

On Thursday evening, as I walked down Bridges-street to the theatre, I spied Le Sugg waiting for me. I eluded

* The English Opera.

his vigilance by turning into the Strand, and going in at the public entrance. Shortly afterwards a note was presented to me, which I saw was in Lee Sugg's hand-writing. I therefore exclaimed, "Take it away! How often must I tell you never to give me any notes here, for I will not open them?" I was a victim to my own order; for little did I think that a letter from Charles was lying in the hall. I always take my letters as I am going home at night. Huckel informed me that Lee Sugg was still waiting in the street, as I was about to leave the theatre. In my anxiety to avoid him, I forgot to ask for my letters and went through another door. Thus I missed Charles's letter; but I did not avoid my evil genius. He spied me, and followed me in a pair of slippers, having pawned his boots. He wants me to lend him money to set him up in a chandler's shop!!

Perry gave us a splendid dinner — and, but that I was obliged to "tumble," we had a very pleasant day. Soane was there, who is a very good-natured architectural old man; but any being so full of the *shop* I never met with. He is very anxious to be of service to Charles, and has requested that he will call on him the moment he returns. This I do not mean to forget.

Sir Walter, Terry, Tom Hill, and Heber, breakfasted with me yesterday; the latter brought by the former, which flattered me much. They stayed in the gallery till one o'clock. The weather here is very blue-devilish; and I am quite grieved on your account.

I went to Wilton's yesterday. It was very pleasant, but too many strangers for me. I took great pains to sit between Mrs. Rolls and Dubois, and succeeded. The house absolutely princely. I think I am correct in saying that in point of taste and elegance I have never seen it excelled.

If I had ———'s talent of describing a feast, I could convince him that no Lord Mayor could ever vie with Jack Wilton. Dubois lamented the absence of Tom Hill, as he was convinced neither he nor I was capable of giving any notion of the feast. "To be without Hill," Duby said, "was dreadful—a great battle fought, and no historian."

Mr. Wilton, whose dinner is mentioned in the foregoing letter, was distinguished by the appellation of the "East Indian Chesterfield," from the elegance of his manners, and refinement and wit of his conversation. He was supposed at this period to be nearly seventy years old, yet he managed so well to preserve his originally fine figure that, without observing his face, he might have been mistaken, on his entering a room, for a man of five-and-twenty. He dressed most rigidly, and always according to the mode, and was evidently desirous of being thought much younger than he really was. He, however, wore his hair (which was quite white) always powdered, and dressed out on either side with wings, *à la pigeon*, after the approved fashion of his youth (and never allowed his hat to press them out of shape), so that, with the transposition of two words, he answered the description given by Sheridan in "The School for Scandal," of the lady who is said to resemble a mended statue —

"The *trunk* was modern, but the *head* antique."

Mr. Mathews considered him the *beau idéal* of

Lord Ogleby, and a perfect model for any performer of that character.

Amongst the extraordinary effects of the popularity of my husband's "At Home," were the applications made, under every kind of pretext, letters being sent to him from all sorts of professions and trades about town. One man offered him snuff for himself and friends, if he would only mention the name and shop of the manufacturer. Another promised him a perpetual polish for his boots upon the same terms. He was solicited to mention every sort of exhibition, and to puff all the new quack medicines; and patents, from surgeon's instruments to mangles, called for his public approval. There was no limit to these requisitions.—Lozenges were to be tasted, razors to be used, razor-strops to be tried. The wines sent for him to taste, though said to be "of the finest quality," nevertheless required a "bush," which was expected to be hung out nightly at his "house of entertainment," for "value received." Patent filters, the price of which was to be liquidated by his praise; wigs and waistcoats, boots and boot-hooks, "ventilating hats," and bosom friends! — all *gratis!* And an advertising dentist one day presented himself, offering to teethe our whole family, if Mr. Mathews would draw his metallic teeth into notice. In fact, he was inundated with presents and petitions, so that our cottage sometimes looked like a bazaar; and I had

frequently occasion to exercise my ingenuity in contriving how and to whom I might convey the generally useless articles forced upon our acceptance. In fact, we eventually paid for them by purchases or presents, of and to the parties from whom they came, in order to smooth down their disappointments at my husband's declining to comply with the requests with which they were accompanied.

Amongst the most amusing of these varieties, was a petition from Mrs. Johnson, who yearned to hear her "American Soothing Syrup" commended, and *re*-commended by my husband; and she one night held forth the tempting bribe, that she and a party of friends would appear in the boxes, in the fond hope of hearing this "real blessing to mothers" pointed out by Mr. Mathews to the maternal part of the audience. At length, my husband's gallantry (and for the joke's sake) devised the mention of it in the "Dilbery Family," where he made Mr. D—— boast that he had, in the course of his domestic duties, found it right to supply his family with this inestimable balm.

But these were minor evils of his popularity compared to others, arising from his use of names. The commonest upon which he could fix for his characters (Smith excepted) laid him open to the "hope" of its possessor "that Mr. Mathews would adopt *one less known* for his purpose;" and

if in escaping from this difficulty he made his peace with one person, by adopting a different name, he fell under the censure of another, who requested that he would choose one *more common* than the writer's. Some were "informed that their names and titles were held up to ridicule," when such names and titles had never before been heard of by the accused. In fact, there was no doubt but that this was often the trick of the mischievous to annoy the ridiculously vain, to fret them with a feigned account of the manner in which their name, person, or peculiarities, were "shown up" by Mr. Mathews in his "At Home." Some such hoax was played off upon the respectable writer of the following letter.

TO MR. MATHEWS.

SIR, Lombard Street, 3rd June, 1820.

My friends inform me that you have committed the indiscretion in your public exhibitions of imitations or mimicries, of introducing me by *name*. This is a trespass, or an outrage, upon private peace and right which cannot be submitted to, and must not be tolerated. Every ridicule, or singularity, every oddity, bad habit, or abuse, is in its genus or species, its character of excess or extravagance, open and free to you and all others, to expose to contempt, or to correct by exaggeration; but the *name* and *person* of each individual must have protection from such exposure, and assault upon his peace, reputation, or general interest.

I am inclined to suppose this to be an inconsideration, which, on reflection and advice, you will discontinue in my case, and not repeat in that of any other person. Your exhibition has scope enough without trespassing upon individual character, which you have no more right to assault in this manner, to turn to your own profit, than you have to pick a well-furnished pocket, or to break down the fences of a field. As I am not very sensitive to such an attack, I shall be satisfied by the *entire* discontinuance of the offence. On any repetition of it in any manner, proper measures shall be taken, legal or personal, to correct such an abuse of all warrantable licence.

I do not yet know the *manner* of the notice of me, but in *such* a case, whether you expose me for example or caution, there is equal cause for my protest. In the one case, a petty and absurd vanity, too common among us at this time, may be supposed to be gratified; in the other, a submission to the indignity may be thought to be an admission of the truth of the caricature, which, whether a likeness or gross distortion, is alike an offence, an indefensible attack, when pointing out and marking an individual by *name*, and exposing him to general contempt, or misconception of his conduct or character.

I am, sir,

Your humble servant,

THOS. R———.

Mr. Mathews, always considerate in regard to the feelings of others, took the trouble to write a long answer to this letter, assuring the gentleman that he not only did *not* mention him, but was totally ignorant that such a name as his (a peculiar one) existed. He invited him to a pri-

vate box, in order to judge for himself whether his informant had any right to suppose that a personal attack was intended. This produced another letter from the complaining party.

TO MR. MATHEWS.

SIR, Lombard Street, 5th June, 1820.

The assurances given me were positive, and three times repeated; and they were not meant to be malicious, mischievous, false, or wicked. I thought the thing very improbable. If true, I had no doubt of its great impropriety in the case of any person. My son attended your performance last week, but did not select the proper exhibition. He was again with you on Saturday, and reported to me yesterday, that he heard no mention of me, nor saw the opportunity of any allusion of any sort. This was the probability of the matter; but I wrote to you on the faith of the testimony of those who *thought* they heard my name, and in allusion to what has been a little my habit.

Although the misconception is *very* extraordinary, and still unaccountable, your abnegation of the matter is quite satisfactory, and agrees as much with probability as the propriety of the fact. As you do not make any other personal allusions by name, it was the more curious that mine, so little obvious to you, should be an exception of your general and proper reserve. I shall be curious to set you right in this, and shall endeavour to pay you a visit on Thursday, before which I may, armed with your frank and full disavowal, be able to try again the memory and the "ears" of my informant, who is quite innocent of the smallest disposition to injure you, or to "hoax me."

There being no offence, it is now only a riddle, which I will endeavour to solve, rather for its oddity than its importance. What must history be, if this be all the certainty of fact, and accuracy of report at which we can arrive, of what is said at the Lyceum, done at Manchester, or passing at Calais, Paris, and in Spain?

I am truly, sir,
Your obedient servant,
THOS. R——.

It followed that Mr. R—— came on the night proposed, and returned home not only satisfied but highly gratified. This specimen will serve for the many cases of misconception and false estimate of *self*, which so often lead us to think that "the eyes of all Europe are upon us."

CHAPTER VI.

Visit to a Military Amateur Actor. — Ludicrous *Contretemps.* — Negotiation between Mr. Mathews and Mr. Harris. — Close of the Performance at the English Opera House, and Mr. Mathews's Address on the Occasion.

Mr. Mathews had occasion frequently to remark, that people did more preposterous things to him than he ever heard of being done to others; and really, the liberties many persons took with him seems almost incredible, though one would not have thought him the sort of man, whose general behaviour would invite or encourage freedoms. When, moreover, it is considered that he bore the reputation of possessing an irritable temper, it was no small evidence of his known good-nature that people ventured upon them who were anxious for his favour, and most wary when they had dealings with others who were less placable in their nature. I have sometimes, while I marvelled at such proceedings, thought such cases happened especially to my husband, as if to acquaint him with

the varieties of human nature. He had some time in his travels picked up an acquaintance with an Artillery officer, whom he afterwards introduced to me. This gentleman was without any very distinguishing talent to recommend him to society, but always evinced excessive deference for the opinions of others. He had, however, one talent, that of imitating extremely well a certain Irish brogue, which in telling a story aided the effect of the anecdote. I believe this power originally recommended him to Mr. Mathews, who was always too well pleased with those who would try to entertain *him*, ever to repel or neglect the possessor of such good nature.

Captain —— was always an inoffensive, and sometimes an agreeable person. He often shared our hospitality, and had good taste enough to delight in the society he met at our table. He admired, nay, professedly idolized my husband, not only professionally but personally, and bestowed upon me that portion of consideration which it is the habit of a man of the world to keep ready made up in packets of various sizes, to distribute according to the pretensions of every lady in whose welcome he luxuriates.

This gentleman was a bachelor; but it appeared that he had a sister residing with him, whom he frequently mentioned, with a longing desire to introduce her to me; and often, very often pressed Mr. Mathews and myself to "pay a visit to

Woolwich" (where he then resided), for this purpose, on one of those occasions when Mr. Mathews's professional pursuits could leave a night as well as day open. At first we merely bowed in acknowledgment of such a desire, and in five minutes after forgot the matter. Still the captain came to see us, indeed never omitted an occasion; and though he confessedly rejoiced in a numerous stock of friends, it fortunately happened that, however short the invitation to a *dinner*-party might be, he happened, by good luck, I say, to be on *that* day "at our service."

Captain —— was a devotee to theatrical matters; and it appeared to me that, although in the Artillery, the going off of a cannon was a matter of less interest to him than the "going off" of a new play, for the report of which he anxiously listened. He was, in fact, an amateur actor, and had so far infected his brother officers with his ardour as to have fired off a private play or so, to assist which he drilled these "drama's raw recruits." Often did he borrow our "most attentive ears," and pour into them volleys of praise of these performances, and as often pressed us to "pay a visit to Woolwich", for the purpose of gladdening our hearts with a view of the amateurs' proficiency:—"He should be *so* happy to see us there;" and "his sister would be *so* charmed!" In fact, my dear kind-hearted husband, at length melted before the warmth of Captain ——'s

enthusiasm. He recollected his own early vanities in this way, and promised that the next exhibition of his and his brother officers should find us admiring witnesses of their glory. Accordingly, (something loath, it must be owned,) we left our comfortable home, green lawn, and flowers, for at best a hot ride, and fussy dinner in a small cottage, of which the commendable pride of our friend, as it appeared, required us to partake. So, one lovely morning we left Kentish Town, in order to "pay a visit to Woolwich," carrying with us our most indulgent feelings for the occasion.

On referring to Captain ——'s letter, in which he expressed his entire satisfaction at our at length yielding to his and his sister's wishes, &c., my husband discovered that no particular address was to be found in it. *N'importe.* "Captain ——, Woolwich," was of course sufficient, as his receipt of our letter proved, and the plan would be to stop at the principal inn, and there, if Captain —— was not waiting to receive us, we thought that we should assuredly learn his address. Accordingly, to that inn-door we repaired on our arrival. "Is Captain —— here?" asked my husband of a man, whose abrupt rush to the horse's head had nearly caused the animal to jerk us out of the tilbury (the conveyance we had chosen for so blithe an occasion, partly because we would not burthen our bachelor friend with our servants). "Pray," inquired Mr. Mathews,

"can you tell me where Captain —— lives?" A dapper waiter advanced, exclaiming, "If your name's *Mathus*, sir, it's all right: the captain has been and settled everything, and you're to get out" (meaning by this that we were to *go in*). Into the house we accordingly went. After the waiter, who preceded us, had briskly dusted the table with his napkin (his only resource, as there was no fire for him to stir), Mr. Mathews asked, "Pray, how long will it be before Captain —— returns?"

"Can't say, sir."

"Didn't he leave word where I was to drive to him?"

"Oh no! sir. He 'ticklerly desired you 'd stay here."

"Well, but I can't leave my horse, tired and heated as he is, standing at the door."

"Oh no! sir; he's safe and comfortable in the stable. The captain ordered all that."

"Oh" (said my husband aside to me), "of course he has no stabling of his own; but pray" — to the waiter — "shall we have far to walk, for I am lame?"

"Oh no! sir; our stable-yard is close by; only round the corner — not far, sir."

"I mean to Captain ——'s house?"

"Oh! I really don't know, I 'm sure, sir."

"What! do you not know where he lives?"

"No, sir, can't say I do."— And out bustled the waiter.

"I see how it is," said my husband, rather vexed; "that thoughtless fellow has forgotten my lameness, and expects me to walk, perhaps a mile, which he thinks nothing, to his house." Then, after a pause and a look round, he added: "What a melancholy wretched room this is! Well, we have not to remain here long, or it would drive me mad to sit here." It certainly was one of the worst specimens of the "inn's worst room." The carpet was thin and partial; the chairs had wooden backs, and horse-hair seats sunk into the frame, as hard as possible, and slanting to the front; a large naked table, with flaps hanging down most disconsolately to the ground; a fire-screen in tent-stitch, very ricketty, and top-heavy, on which were depicted two sheep, much larger than the shepherdess, under whose care they were placed. Over the sofa (another instrument of torture) hung a red and blue print, framed and glazed, representing Fortune, leaning proudly upon a red cartwheel, the *pendant* to which was an elaborate description of the final leave-taking of Louis XVI. with his family, enough to break the heart of a stone to look at — as a work of art; while over the chimney-piece hung an oil portrait of a middle-aged female, with two chubby arms, crossed demurely over her stomacher, and whose eyes, which evidently had given the painter some trouble to dispose of, leered over her most prominent shoulder

at everybody in the room. There was nothing else to attract the notice of the visiter, for the windows of this dreary apartment looked "nowhere!" and my husband, doubtless contrasting this melancholy position (which he expressively termed "waiting for bail,") with our cheerful house and its lovely outlook, sighed deeply, and taking out his watch, exclaimed, "Why, it 's time he came, if the performance is to commence early, or we shan't have time to dress and dine."

At this moment a bustle at the door attracted our attention, and the landlord appeared, preceding the waiter, who carried a well-filled dinner-tray; the flaps of the table alluded to were lifted up (much against their will), and a thin, wretched, white dinner-cloth spread upon its bare boards. We sat and watched the process of "laying" it with that sort of endurance with which we look upon a ceremony in which we have no concern, and are obliged to witness.

"Pray do you know at what hour Captain —— dines?" at length asked my husband.

"Can't say I do, sir," replied the landlord, as he bustled out of the room.

"It 's strange that he don't come! When was he here, waiter?"

"Last night, sir. He came to tell us that he expected you and your lady here to-day, and desired us to have dinner pervided to the asact time, as he said you were very pertickler."

"What! here? Then we are to dine *here*, are we?"

"Yis, sir. Said, you was fond o' ducks and green peas, sir; and ordered a bottle of our best port to be cooled; and desired us to be sure to be careful not to let you have any trouble about anything, nor your spouse neither, sir."

"Well, come, that's very considerate. Oh, I see,"— turning again to me, in a half-whisper, as the waiter bustled about, jingled the glasses, and clattered the knives, to the annoyance of my husband, who detested such sounds, and who put his fingers to his ears while it lasted; — "his means, I suppose, are not quite competent to produce so good a dinner as he wishes to give us, and the foolish fellow has therefore arranged it here. It's a great bore; but we must make the best of it. Well,"— to the waiter, who was leaving the room,—"but you have laid the cloth only for two!"

"Do 'ee expect anybody to dine wi' ye, sir?"

"Why, of course, Captain and Miss ——."

"Oh, very well, sir."— Down clattered two more veteran knives and wide two-pronged forks, which made me think of the peas with a pensive and speculative feeling.

My husband then proposed that we should at once make the alteration requisite in our dress; and I adjourned to another room, promising to hasten my toilette in order to vacate in favour of

my husband, after he had looked after "Falstaff," his horse. We were at last both dressed; and so was the dinner said to be; but in vain we waited for our kind inviter. My husband fidgetted, and twitched his watch from his fob from time to time, with signs of exhausting patience: —"It's very odd," he remarked; "something must have happened to these people. What *can* it mean?"

At last the waiter suggested that the dinner "would be quite spiled;" and my husband consented to its coming to table, ordering the covers not to be taken out of the room. In came then, in regular rotation, soup, fish, flesh, and fowl, wines, white and red, in bottles resembling vinegar-cruets, placed at every corner of the table. In short, our lavish provider made us blush, though unseen, at the unnecessary cost to which he had put himself on our account; but, as he did not appear, we were at last obliged to let all be taken away but said vinegar-cruets, out of which we drank the health of our entertainer in a glass of most execrable port-wine (which my husband stigmatized as "Day and Martin's blacking, ink," &c.) Just at this critical moment in burst Captain ——, breathless, and full of apologies for his tardy appearance; welcomed us heartily to Woolwich; but couldn't stay a minute!

"But, won't you dine?" asked my husband, trying to detain him.

"Dine! my dear sir! I *have* dined. I hope you have found everything here to your satisfaction!"

"Well, but Miss ——?"

"Oh, she's getting ready to go to the theatre, where I 'm now running to dress, so pray excuse me. I shall scarcely be in time; and I need not tell you, that, in theatrical matters, there's no apology necessary for haste. So adieu for the present, my *dear* madam and sir! We meet again in half an hour face to face!"

And away ran the amateur actor, leaving us still to take our ease at our inn. Just then entered mine host with tea and coffee, tea-cakes, bread and butter, dry toast, plates, knives, accompanied by the usual inn-clatter while placing them. Another meal, in fact, was spread before us! My husband looked impatient, put his fingers again to his ears, and asked me aloud, if I "*wanted* all this?" I, of course, shook my head; but the landlord respectfully informed us, that it was part of the captain's *order!* Again my husband muttered "Foolish fellow!" However, not to seem ungrateful, we took a cup of tea, and prepared to go to the theatre, whither, after proper directions obtained from the landlord, we proceeded by slow stages, my poor husband halting for rest every two minutes. The distance was longer than we were told (as is always the case), and my husband, aching with the exertion,

longed once more to be seated. In our friend's hurried look in upon us, no arrangement had been mentioned by him, or thought of by us, about our accommodation; nor did he give us time to ask about it. So Mr. Mathews took the first opportunity that a pressing crowd allowed, to whisper to the box-keeper: "My name is Mathews."

"Yes, sir," answered the man (with an unconscious stare.)

"I 'm Captain ——'s friend."

"Indeed, sir!" with a courteous smile and bow.

"He has told you that I was coming, I suppose?"

"N—o, sir, I think *not*."

"Hasn't he reserved a box, or places for me?"

"I 'll *see*, sir. Your name?"

This was a delicate question; however, again my husband pronounced it in a low tone, and the man repeated it aloud. After a reasonable time he returned.

"I beg your pardon, sir," said he, "your name *is* down in the box-plan for two seats in a back row; all the rest are taken, sir."

"Oh, very well! anywhere, so that I sit down."

And we were proceeding, but were stopped.

"Beg pardon, sir: you have not paid."

Here a momentary pause of surprise ensued.

"Oh! I 'm expected to pay, am I?"

"Please, sir."

"Umph!" (with a droll look at me); "how much, pray?"

"Why, sir, what you like, as it's for a charity, but the *reggler* price is three shillings each."

"Oh, very well; there!" paying the "reggler" price (for at that moment my husband's charitable feelings were probably a little damped). With eyes a little opened, we took our seats in the "back row;" and miserable accommodation it was; but there we were!

"Poor ——," said my husband, "will be annoyed, I'm sure, when he recollects that he forgot to give us admissions. I suspect the box-keeper is a rogue. I'm sure —— never intended me to pay. However, it's lucky I'd money with me,"— a very rare occurrence indeed this was.

The curtain rose full three quarters of an hour after the promised time, and we saw the play of "She would and She would not," barbarously sacrificed upon the altar of personal vanity, under the sacred guise of charity. We were very uneasy at all we saw. "What shall we say," said Mr. Mathews, "to —— and Miss —— at supper? I wish I had not come. It's very awkward not to be able to say something complimentary to our friend; but really he was *very* bad! He should never attempt anything but the brogue. I know he will be eager for praise, and really I cannot give it him with sincerity."

Well, at length the performance was over. Several of the officer performers, in their own dresses, joined their respective friends to receive compliments. We soon perceived Captain —— speaking to a party in the stage-box; and he afterwards took a lady upon his arm, who Mr. Mathews told me was his sister. "Oh," said my husband, "they will find us out. We will sit quietly till they come round." And we sat "quietly," till at last, all having left the theatre apparently but ourselves, we slowly rose and went away too, Mr. Mathews blaming Captain —— and his sister for not looking first for us, before they proceeded to the inn. However, we departed as fast as my poor lame husband could hobble. When we arrived at the inn our first question was, whether our friends were up stairs?"

"No, sir; but your supper is *quite* ready."

We silently proceeded to the rooms, where we found enough, indeed, laid out to feed a hungry family. In mute dissatisfaction, we sat looking at each other. Presently, my husband getting hastily off his chair, approached the place at the head of the table; and, in something like nervous agitation, proceeded to cut up a cold chicken near him, helping me to about half of it, whether I would or not; then flinging down his knife and fork, and taking some snuff hastily, he rested his head upon his hand, shaking his knee with an

irritable motion, and making what is called the devil's tattoo with his heel. An unbroken silence ensued. At last, I retired to the melancholy bedroom assigned me, and left my husband to finish the evening with a dirty newspaper, which I saw delivered to him at his request, as the only one in the house.

The next morning broke in clouds, that foretold a wet day. It had been Mr. Mathews's intention, with Captain ——'s interest, to show me what was to be seen in Woolwich before we returned home, and the threatening sky was a disappointment. "—— and his sister will certainly come to us before we go away—*of course* he will!" And my husband said "of course" as if I had said I doubted it. However, no captain appeared, or sent an apology for not appearing; and, as we had out-stayed the last possible limit of our time before we thought of going (it being one of Mr. Mathews's performance nights), the horse and gig were ordered to be forthcoming; and while we were expecting it, the bill was brought in. My husband started at the sum-total, but soon recovered, and asked me what money I had with me? I gave him my purse, which he quietly, though with a serio-comic expression in his face, emptied into his hand, and returned to me. Then counting up the amount, and laying all but a shilling or two upon the bill, pointed to it expressively to the landlord, who waited, and

gave it into his hand. I stared at all this, but followed my husband's silent example.

The rain threatened, but we hoped to elude it, and mounted our little vehicle. The clouds looked blacker still; and by the time we reached Blackheath we were literally wet to the skin, my summer garments clinging to me, and a gauze hat hanging over my face, being borne down by the weight of the rain, with which it was saturated. A more deplorable condition cannot be imagined! We were perfectly ashamed of our drive through town, where everybody stared, and some, who evidently knew us, smiled. When we arrived at the home we had left the day before with such good humour, we soon rejoiced in dry skins. A bed being warmed, I was enjoined by my alarmed husband to get into it, in order, as he said, "to save my life;" while he exercised himself on horseback, the clouds having cleared off, and the rain ceased, as if it had been all showered upon us.

When we met over our quiet comfortable dinner, my husband asked me calmly, what I thought of the trick which had been played us, and whether I could recollect what injury we had ever done to Captain —— that could suggest such barbarous revenge? &c. He then placed "the bill" before me, which was not only for the horse, but for the lavish entertainment we had been "pervided" with. "Oh!" I exclaimed, "you ought

not to have discharged the whole; Captain —— will be quite vexed at your doing so, and perhaps offended. Mr. Mathews asked dryly, "Do you think so?" I replied, "I 'm sure he will. Don't you remember how often he requested that I would let him introduce me to his sister, and begged of me to allow him the pleasure of making us acquainted?"—"Yes," answered Mr. Mathews, "but perhaps he meant here?"—"Well," I rejoined, "but I cannot mistake his reiterated expression, when he last left us, which was, 'Pray, *pray* do not forget that you have promised me to pay a visit to Woolwich this summer.' Those were his very words." My husband smiled good-humouredly, and replied, "Well, and we *have paid* a visit to Woolwich, and it 's cheap at the money!"

Notwithstanding this flagrant act of rudeness and neglect, our complaisant captain, in the course of time, made his reappearance (without any expression of offence at the liberty we had taken in paying the bill) at our table, where he was received with good temper; for my cold had long since been cured, and my husband's annoyance forgotten. Again Captain —— was our most devoted slave, again addressed us as "My *very* dear madam and sir," and enjoyed our parties as often as he was asked to join them. Indeed, I must give Captain —— his measure of praise, by allowing that no man ever was more attentive,

kind, and obliging, than himself to us — *in our own house.* After all, we were most to blame, in acting upon an implied rather than an actual invitation to the captain's house and table, which we interpreted according to our own habits and feelings, rather than the intentions of him who uttered a mere "matter-of-course" in return for our hospitalities. This circumstance had no effect upon our future treatment of the captain, who continued to come and go; although, as his sister had not paid her brother's acquaintances the usual courtesy of a resident to visiters, by even leaving her name at the inn where her brother had "bestowed us," I of course did not feel it necessary to solicit her acquaintance in any way, especially as we never once thought of "paying" another visit to Woolwich.

The following letter is from Mr. Frederick Reynolds, the dramatist, on the occasion of a treaty between my husband and Mr. Henry Harris, Mr. Reynolds acting as the medium of an engagement, for a limited period, in the Dublin Theatre, of which Mr. Harris had become lessee.

TO CHARLES MATHEWS, ESQ.

MY DEAR SIR,

I sincerely hope, for your own sake, as well as Mr. Harris's, that you will perform sixteen nights in Dublin

during the month of September, to commence on Monday 1st; four nights a-week. If, however, it would suit you to commence about the 20th August, Mr. Harris, I have no doubt, would meet your wishes. When you last performed there, you will recollect, it was at the Rotunda, an out-of-the-way place; you will now give your Entertainments in a new spacious theatre, situated in the most central part of Dublin, and for beauty and capability equalling Drury Lane or Covent Garden. Of course you must be aware that there must be additional expense for lighting, door-keepers, &c.; however, Mr. Harris will not haggle with you for a few pounds, but, feeling confident of your success, will engage you on your former terms, which are as follow. Please to observe, I copy them from your own letter to Mr. Harris:—

"I will accept your second proposal, namely, to pay you 10*l.* per night; to divide with you after 60*l.* But in this case, I shall not bring any confidential person with me (only a servant); and, as I am totally incapable of superintending servants, door-keepers, printers, newspapers, &c., I must stipulate for the whole being done by persons in your employ; and, as you will have an interest in it, I wish all expenses of every description to be defrayed by your treasurer, and let me settle with him weekly. In short, it is to be considered, that I am engaged by you, and that I can in truth say, 'I have nothing to do with the bills or the candles, &c.; Mr. Harris's treasurer will settle with you.' Of course, you will find all the door-keepers usually employed by you. I wish such freedoms as you may have granted to the public press to remain untouched, and to reply to such applications 'I must refer you to Mr. Harris.' You will gratify me by agreeing to my wishes."

Mr. Harris did agree to the above proposal, and will

again: ergo, if you will send me a letter to the above effect, the matter is at once concluded.

Sincerely wishing you success,

I am very truly yours,

F. REYNOLDS.

June 17th, Warren Street, Fitzroy Square.

On the 27th of June the season at the English Opera closed, and Mr. Mathews made his farewell bow at the end of his third campaign. The house was extremely well filled, and he contrived to keep it in a roar of laughter, as hearty and unrestrained as on the first night of his attempt. At the close of his performance he came forward, and thus addressed the audience:—

"Ladies and Gentlemen,—Thus I conclude the third season of my Entertainments, which, through your unexampled kindness and patronage, I may boast of as having been pre-eminently successful. To say that I am proud and grateful for the distinction you have conferred on me, would be but faintly to express the warmth of those feelings which animate me towards my benefactors. To have already drawn together one hundred and twenty audiences, crowded by rank and fashion, is no mean boast for an humble individual like myself; but when I reflect that I may exclaim with the Roman hero, "ALONE I DID IT," I confess I feel a glow of self-gratulation that my good fortune prompted me to quit the long-beaten path of the regular drama, to adventure on so novel and hazardous an undertaking.

"It now only remains for me to assure you, that no exertions of ingenuity, or labour of observation, shall be

wanting to render my next year's entertainment still more deserving of your favour than those which have preceded it; and I do trust to be enabled so far to vary its nature as to present you with something new, not only in substance and character, but in method and arrangement also. At all events, I trust I shall not have exhausted in myself the happy faculty of exciting your mirth, and I hope you will not have lost the inclination to come here and be merry.

"Ladies and gentlemen, with reiterated thanks, and the most cordial good wishes, I now respectfully bid you farewell."

As he retired, the pit rose and greeted him with the waving of hats, whilst loud cheers resounded from every part of the house.

CHAPTER VII.

Mr. Mathews's Visit to the Provinces. — His Letters to Mrs. Mathews. — Interesting Associations connected with Litchfield. — Lady Butler and Miss Ponsonby. — Personification of the late J. P. Curran. — Opinion of Mathews by Lord Byron and Sir Walter Scott. — Letters of Mr. Mathews to Mrs. Mathews. — Sensitiveness of Mr. Mathews. — Anecdote. — Letters continued. — Two Impostors. — Mr. Mathews's Proposal to erect a Monument to Shakspeare at Stratford; Public Meeting on the Occasion. — Intended Ascent in a Balloon.

THE rigid determination of Mr. Mathews to lose no time in the prosecution of his plan of atoning for past mistakes by personal sacrifice and labour, induced him again to form provincial engagements, without allowing himself an interval of rest after his fatiguing season. In pursuance of this resolution, therefore, on the evening of his last night at the English Opera House, he took leave of home, sleeping in town in order to begin his journey thence the next morning at daybreak. His first letter, merely a few lines scribbled at his first halt on the road, gave me the following hurried notice of his concluding night's performance.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Maidenhead, June 26th, 1820.

Arrived here not quite broiled. Just off again. Good house last night; everything went well. Quite smooth in my address. The Duke of Wellington was in a private box, and sent me a message at the end of the first part, begging that I would be quick between the acts, and that I would not mention his name.*

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Ludlow, July 6th, 1820.

This is the most beautiful town, I think, in England, in the most luxuriant country. Here are two-days' races. They have evening races; and the play does not begin till these are over. Last night I began my work at ten o'clock! At half past nine not one person in the house; by ten it was full; ay, 40*l.*! and wonderful too — such a barn! To-night I expect the same sort of thing.

I never heard of anything so hard or so unjust in my life, as your suffering from that fiend, Mrs. ——; my blood boiled while I read your account. For once my discernment has been superior to yours; I never could endure that woman. Pray write often, if only four lines, for I have been long enough away to be very low, at times, and I have been fidgety and uncomfortable all this day in consequence of the non-arrival of the paper.

C. MATHEWS.

* Not wishing a pointed recognition from the audience. —A. M.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Evesham, July 25th, 1820.

I was travelling all day yesterday, and arrived here just as the mail made its appearance for London.

I did wonders at Birmingham. What think you of 90*l.* in a room? This was Thursday. The common outcry was against Saturday for a second performance, as it is pay-night, and the worst night in the week:—"What a pity you can't play to-morrow?"—"No; impossible!"—"Monday?"—"Advertised at Cheltenham!"—"Well, it's a pity, for I really would not advise you to play on Saturday: we are all in our counting-houses till eleven."—"Never mind," said I, "I will try." I did: 75*l.* Ha! I have no doubt, no hesitation in pronouncing that this was the greatest thing I ever accomplished, and shows that my new name is greater than my old one, for my attraction had evidently ceased when I was in Birmingham last. This completes my right reading, 400*l.* in the month; not clear, mind.

I have seen within these three or four days an extraordinary exhibition; four children all born in one day of one mother, all exactly alike; sixteen months old, and all hearty.

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Stourbridge, Thursday, August 22nd, 1820.

I write on my road to the "delicious farm-house," near Kidderminster, where I dine and sleep. I am well, beautifully well. Oh! how I longed for Charley at Litchfield. Such architectural gems! such a cathedral! Chantrey's glorious monument to the two children of one of the

prebendaries — not the smallest of the lions; indeed, it is altogether a very interesting city. The house in which Dr. Johnson was born is still extant, and precisely as it appeared at his birth; the house also of David Garrick's father, inhabited till within twenty-four years by Peter his brother; the school where Garrick was educated; the house of Miss Seward; the monuments of all these persons that enrich the cathedral. Last night I had some remarkably fine Litchfield ale, which "reminded me" of the "Beaux Stratagem." I exclaimed to Crisp, "I eat my ale, and drink my ale."—"Oh," said the waiter, much to my surprise, being familiar with the quotation, "Oh, sir, there are two rooms in this house exactly in the state they were when that there play was written. Mr. Boniface lived here, sir."—"This is a curious town," said I, "altogether. Mr. Garrick ought to have been born here."—"To be sure he ought, sir. I am glad to hear you say that. It was too bad of his father to go to Hereford when his wife was so near her time; but we claims him for all that, sir."

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Oswestry, August 31st, 1820.

I am quite as anxious as yourself to have our new planting job commenced, but I cannot even guess at the expense, nor can you, I am afraid. I have been at the Marquis of Stafford's lately, and took notice of the shrubs. If you have not got any in the grounds, a saddle-leaf tulip is beautiful. Have we any copper-coloured beech? Common stagshorn is another beauty. I am also recommended one or two medlar-trees. We have a weeping-ash, I think; if not, pray get one: when large they are

beautiful. A willow also I would recommend, a weeping Morello cherry, and a red-blossomed hawthorn. I think I could screw myself up to 100*l.* cheerfully, but fear hugely that to fill up the Ha Ha, would take half that sum, and we should not be inclined to ha ha, at that. I have no idea of your "sine qua non;" a walk all round appears to me impossible.

I am really very glad at the successful result of your interference with the ——s. If the cause were really what Mrs. —— suspected, (the society of abandoned women,) she had; and has nothing to apprehend, for those are the very women from whom a wife has the least to fear; it is they who can best show a man of well-regulated mind the value of a really virtuous companion, confidant, and friend. Whatever may have been the cause, I rejoice at the result. I am just delighted with an unexpected letter from you, the cheerful tone of which has made me fancy that even the inn-wine has exhilarated me. I am truly pleased that your friends are doing so much to cheer you in my absence. The assurance that you and dear Charley are happy in your home makes my work light and my "labour pleasure." C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Oswestry, Sept. 4th, 1820.

The dear inseparable inimitables, Lady Butler and Miss Ponsonby, were in the boxes here on Friday. They came twelve miles from Llangollen, and returned, as they never sleep from home. Oh, such curiosities! I was nearly convulsed. I could scarcely get on for the first ten minutes after my eye caught them. Though I had never seen them, I instantaneously knew them. As they are seated, there is not one point to distinguish them from men:

the dressing and powdering of the hair; their well-starched neckcloths; the upper part of their habits, which they always wear, even at a dinner-party, made precisely like men's coats; and regular black beaver men's hats. They looked exactly like two respectable superannuated old clergymen; one the picture of Boruwlaski. I was highly flattered, as they never were in the theatre before.

The packets now sail at seven in the morning; all *day*-work instead of night, which is delightful; and the weather is heavenly. People here are extremely hospitable; but, of all days in the year, Mr. Ormsby Gore went to Carnarvon assizes (being high sheriff) the day before I arrived. He only returned yesterday; and almost forced me away from the inn. I, however, could not conveniently go there, but have been to call this morning. Such a place!

By the by, have you any magnolias in the grounds? if not, get me one or two. I saw a Portugal laurel, only four years old, full half the size of that great beauty at Lord Mansfield's; pray have one or two of them placed by themselves on our new lawn.

I have to-day received an invitation to call, if I have time as I pass, at Llangollen, to receive in due form, from the dear old gentlemen called Lady Butler and Miss Ponsonby, their thanks for the entertainment I afforded them at the theatre.

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Dublin, Sept. 9th, 1820.

I am now writing at Phillips's, where I am going to dine. He and his wife desire their kindest regards to

"Sensitive Plant." I have the pleasure to say, I have arranged everything here in such a way as, I think, to avoid all fidgets.

Harris undertakes that all the business is to be transacted by his servants, so that my engagement is supposed to be with him, and he pays me a certainty. Instead of having a thousand knocks at my door, and my lodgings full of people, no one has any business with me. I have a short answer to all applications: "I have nothing to do with it; Mr. Farren will settle that. It is Mr. Harris's business, not mine." I have in two days felt the advantage of this in numerous instances, too tedious to mention. I have every prospect of being tolerably happy. I have resolved to remain at an hotel where I put up first, within one hundred yards of the theatre; very comfortable and clean, and in Sackville Street, the finest street in Dublin.

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Dublin, Oct. 6th, 1820.

I have only to repeat my report of triumphant success. I shall, as nearly as possible, average the same receipts as Harris with his whole company. Since you have planted me out from home, I shall not hurry, though I am very home-sick. By the by, I do not recollect saying when I should come home; for I certainly never have had a fixed plan, and my caravan must travel by easy stages. I therefore have had an idea of playing my way up; in which case I could not be up till November. However, my duty to my family ought to be above my love of ease at home; and the longer I am away the better. I will therefore remain as long as you shall think proper,

and will not return till you say you are ready to receive me.

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Dublin, Oct. 11th, 1820.

I have been rather a bad boy this week to you; but the truth is, my life here is so monotonous that I cannot find anything new to relate to you. I find myself generally blue in Dublin, and therefore almost live at Seapoint, where I have become really attached to the inmates. Though a boarding-house, and therefore, you would suppose too public for me, I am quite at home with them; and they allow me to be as dull as I am sometimes inclined to be, without the slightest disposition to annoy me. They have one and all visited my theatre several times; and are aware of the relaxation absolutely necessary after my fatigue. The morning there is particularly delightful; the beautiful sea-breeze, and view of the magnificent bay, &c. make a Seapoint breakfast very desirable, and I have been induced two or three times to go down with some of the party after the performance.

I finish to-night, and shall leave Dublin as soon as I can settle all my affairs. "O, Ma!" how I long to see you. If it were not for the mould, I should be for flying up from Holyhead; but I will be patient.

C. MATHEWS.

During one of these visits at Seapoint a striking instance was given of Mr. Mathews's power of embodying the mind, as well as the person, of those he imitated.

Mr. Plunket, and about forty other gentlemen,

after dinner one day, at the time when Queen Caroline formed so frequent a topic of discussion, had grown rather warm upon it, when Mr. Shehan, since editor of a Dublin paper, wishing to turn the channel of the conversation, and longing to *draw out* Mr. Mathews, proposed the health of John Philpot Curran! "Pooh, pooh," said Mr. Plunket, who was at this moment rather matter-of-fact in his perceptions, "the man's dead! what do you mean by proposing his health?"—"I differ with you entirely," replied Mr. Shehan; "and I return to my toast."—"Then," said Mr. Plunket, "maybe you 'll back your assertion with a bet?"—"With all my heart," replied Mr. Shehan: "how much are you inclined to bet?"—"I 'll bet you five pounds," answered Mr. Plunket, "that John Philpot Curran is dead."—"Done!" added Mr. Shehan: "I 'll bet five pounds that he is *not!* So, gentlemen, I repeat my toast." The "health of Mr. Curran" was accordingly drunk with cheers, which were reiterated on the rising of Mr. Mathews, who happened to be disposed to humour the joke against Mr. Plunket. He began by returning thanks, in the tone, look, and manner of Mr. Curran, and in his phraseology, for the "honour done him;" and afterwards delivered a most eloquent speech on a subject upon which Curran could never have spoken, the trial of Queen Caroline — taking the bias of Curran's politics, and presenting altoge-

ther such a fine specimen of his style of oratory, and such a personification of Ireland's celebrated wit, that he completely impressed his hearers with the actual presence of the man, and induced Mr. Plunket (albeit not fond of parting with his money on such occasions), in an enthusiasm of wonder and delight, to push over the bank-notes to Mr. Shehan, exclaiming, "I 've lost, *fairly* lost! Curran is *not* dead, and can never die while Mathews lives!"

The foregoing anecdote was recently related to me by a friend, as having occurred in his presence. It furnishes one of the many instances that occurred of the same character. His own words were hesitatingly pronounced, but the moment he entered upon the style and manner of another, however brilliant and intellectual, the mental resources of that man seemed immediately to become his own; and he invested himself for the time being with all his attributes and opinions, voice, and other peculiarities, becoming as fluent as though he had previously written down and studied what that particular man *might* say, whose supposed words he uttered. I have heard him deliver long speeches upon any given subject, as from different orators of the day, on themes upon which they never could have spoken, but which they would not have disdained to own. Not only did he give with them the person's tone and gestures; but the peculiar colouring and

shades of their several minds, with the most inconceivable nicety. I have often regretted at the time that I had not been a short-hand writer, in order to take down and preserve these extraordinary instances of his peculiar genius.*

* The Countess of Blessington, in her "Conversations with Lord Byron," has registered the noble poet's opinion, and that also of Sir Walter Scott (which he cites as agreeing with his own), of Mr. Mathews's peculiar mental faculties. This high testimony to my husband's rare powers from such distinguished and indisputable authority, I am very proud to record; and as the impressions of these illustrious personages will support and confirm my recent account and description of Mr. Mathews's particular imitation of their great contemporary, it will not be inappropriately placed as a sequel to my notice of Mr. Curran. Lord Byron's observations to Lady Blessington were as follows: speaking upon literary subjects, he said —

"Translations, for the most part, resemble imitations where the marked defects are exaggerated, and the beauties passed over, always excepting the imitations of Mathews, who seems to have continuous chords in his mind, that vibrate to those in the minds of others, as he gives not only the look, tones, and manners of the persons he personifies, but the very train of thinking, and the expressions they indulge in; and, strange to say, this modern Proteus succeeds best when the imitated is a person of genius or great talent, as he seems to identify himself with him. His imitation of Curran can hardly be so called; it is a *continuation*, and is inimitable. I remember Sir Walter Scott's observing, that Mathews's imitations were of the *mind*, to those who had the key; but as the majority had it not, they were contented with admiring those of the person, and pronounced him a mimic who ought to be considered an accurate and philosophic observer of human nature, blessed with the rare talent of intuitively identifying himself with the minds of others."

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Porkington, near Owestry, Oct. 19th, 1820.

I am here as a visiter to Mr. Ormsby Gore. Porkington is one mile from Oswestry, and is the largest house in England, being four times the size of Hampton Court Palace. The park is forty miles round. There are thirty thousand head of deer in it, and a lake much larger than Derwentwater, or Killarney, or Ontario. The lady he married was six times as rich as Miss Tilney Long, who was said, falsely, to be the richest heiress in England. Miss Ormsby had three millions of ready cash, and a hundred and fifty thousand pounds a year. I heard of my old friend Gore marrying her three years ago, and when I was at Shrewsbury received an invitation from him, which I could not accept, but have now.

The above is something like the reports that were in circulation in Ireland when I was there last, and which have not above two thirds exaggerated the real facts, in two years. It is really a magnificent place, not exceeded by Lord Mansfield's. I go there on Friday; return here on Saturday; and give one night to a ragged manager, to please Gore, on Monday.

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Porkington, Oct. 24th.

Well, I have seen them, heard them, touched them. The pets, "*the ladies*," as they are called, dined here yesterday—Lady Eleanor Butler and Miss Ponsonby, the curiosities of Llangollen mentioned by Miss Seward in her letters, about the year 1760. I mentioned to you in a former letter the effect they produced upon me in public,

but never shall I forget the first burst yesterday upon entering the drawing-room: to find the dear antediluvian darlings, attired for dinner in the same manified dress, with the Croix de St. Louis, and other orders, and myriads of large brooches, with stones large enough for snuff-boxes, stuck into their starched neckcloths! I have not room to describe their most fascinating persons. I have an invitation from them, which I much fear I cannot accept. They returned home last night, fourteen miles, after twelve o'clock. They have not slept one night from home for above forty years. I longed to put Lady Eleanor under a bell-glass, and bring her to Highgate for you to look at. To-morrow night I *give* a night here to Stanton, a poor manager. On Thursday, Litchfield; Saturday, Cheltenham; and then for home; dear home, dear Nancy and Charles!

I really would advise building the wall, if you are clear we have a right to build, but if you are in any doubt, I shall be home about Monday week; but, again I say, do what you like.

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Litchfield, Nov. 26th, 1820.

I rather expected to hear from you. I go hence to-day to Stafford; and shall be all the rest of the week at Newcastle-under-Lyne. It is there young Belcombe lives, who makes my time pass very pleasantly. I have been greatly received here, in consequence of the ill treatment when here last. Parr was the great offender.*

* A lawyer who had the letting of the theatre, and who, like many other such people, thought he had a right to impose upon him.—A. M.

I was invited about a month back; and I wrote a letter to the printer, in which I said I would never act in Litchfield Theatre again while Parr was alive. This made some noise. I met a clergyman at Sir Roger Gresley's, who said, if I would come, he would get the Town Hall. This was done. A few days ago Crisp found Parr's letter, and sent it to me; in which he agreed to let the theatre for two nights for five guineas, though they stopped our goods last year till ten guineas were paid. I read this letter in every place on Friday where I could muster an audience, and gave notice that I would have a touch at the parties at night. After dinner I tried my hand at an epigram, which I delivered after the lawyer's bill, that I always read, in which I introduced the whole transaction, making out the demand from Mr. Griffin for an "At Home," and charge "for stopping the apparel belonging to his country cousins." This made a "great laugh at the time." God bless you.

C. MATHEWS.

Mr. Mathews excessively disliked to be looked at. He would make a circuit, lame as he was, through all the dirty windings of London, or elsewhere, to escape the recognition of the better-bred part of the population; and, like a shying horse, he was always on the look-out for objects of annoyance. In driving about town he would generally keep the blinds down on his side, and would push me forward in the carriage, as he said, "to take off the stare from him." On all public (non-professional) occasions he liked to have some noticeable person with

him, to attract the looks of strangers from him. If he heard his name even whispered, his eyes would fall and his colour mount; yet, sometimes, if any person, in middle or low life, appeared to know him, and discovered their knowledge by any indications that seemed involuntary, a smile, or a leer, he would smile good-humouredly in return, and not feel annoyed at such notice, though at the same time it made him look "sheepishly." Not only did he object to the gaze of strangers, but any other person looking fixedly at him, or any part of his dress, was equally disagreeable to his feelings; yet often, as if by a fatality, he had something about him that seemed to invite the notice he disliked. He constantly wore a miniature eye as a shirt-pin, which naturally attracted the observation of people while they listened to him. From the weight of its setting, it always appeared as if it was in danger of falling out; and when warned of the probability of this happening, he would hastily (and as I knew, impetuously) button up his waistcoat to hide it from further remark.

A droll incident occurred to him after his visit to Sir Roger Gresley. On the following day, having returned to his inn at Litchfield, he was visited by one of the gentlemen whom he had met the evening before. Mr. Mathews was always restless and depressed on his days of performance. This was one of them; and he wil-

lingly would have dispensed with the company of his new acquaintance. As the visit lengthened, he paced up and down the room, from time to time, with some impatience. The visiter, however, was immovable. At length conversation began to flag. The restlessness of my husband increased, but the gentleman seemed rooted to his chair. It was evident too, that while Mr. Mathews walked about, the eyes of the visiter were directed to his feet. He thought that his lameness caused this pointed notice, and sat down abruptly. Still the eyes gazed with undiminished interest; and no admirer of a Cinderella foot ever appeared more fascinated than did this gentleman with those of my poor husband. Again he started up; again he walked and talked. The gentleman answered, but seemed to grow absent. Still, however, his eyes "glared," as my husband angrily termed it, at his feet. At last, quite unable any longer to endure this persevering investigation of his pedal peculiarities, he suddenly informed his visiter that he must excuse him, as he had the business of the night to arrange. The gentleman again looked anxiously at the feet of the now really enraged owner of them (who showed by his manner how much he was annoyed), hesitated, and blushed; but at last timidly observed, "Those shoes of yours are very peculiar, Mr. Mathews?" A snappish "Yes, sir," was all the reply of the wearer, whose anger

was increasing every instant. "I had, I think, a pair *like* them."—"*Probably*," was the only word jerked out in answer. "Indeed I did not think a second pair was to be found of the same make." My husband looked daggers as he observed his visiter's eyes still riveted upon his feet. "You, perhaps, remember," he continued, "where you bought them, Mr. Mathews; for I really shall be glad to get a pair readily?" No reply was given to this, but an impatient movement of said feet into another position. At last, pressed to account for the manner in which he procured these "admirable shoes," he cast his own eyes upon them, and, to his surprise, perceived that they were not his own, but, as the gentleman said, a "very *peculiar* pair," and much too large for his very small feet.

The truth at once flashed across his mind:—"These shoes, sir, perhaps, are yours?" The owner of them, for such he was, bowed, coloured, and said: "Why, Mr. Mathews, if you 'll pardon my *thinking* so, I must confess I believe them to be mine. I had them made after a plan of my own, for shooting-shoes, and missed them this morning with great regret, my servant bringing me a pair much too small for me; and I suspect they would better fit your feet than mine." The matter was clear; and they both laughed heartily. The most extraordinary part of this unconscious felony was, that the person

wearing them did not perceive the bad fit of the shoes, or find himself inconvenienced with their weight, for the soles were embossed with nails!

This incident amused him at the time; and afterwards, whenever a. "good starer" came in his way, the recollection of it had the wholesome effect of making the *stared at* think of the stolen shoes, and sometimes (if not on a *performance* day) smile, instead of expressing annoyance, at any partial notice.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Bristol, Nov. 27th, 1820.

Here I am safe arrived. Had the mail all to myself until Reading, when a drunken buck got in, who amused himself with blowing a horn, screeching, singing, and kicking up all sorts of rows. He was, however, too sick to stay long inside, thank Heaven! and told the guard that he would get out on the box. I did not wake between Marlborough and Bath, notwithstanding his delightful horn, which I occasionally heard in my sleep. We breakfasted together at Marlborough, when, after a stupid stare, he sputtered out, "I don't think I should be much mistaken if I called you by your name, sir?" This is the only "little anecdote" I can relate, as I slept nearly all the way. Mr. Jameson, and Mrs. Routh, my landlady, are both well, and very fat. The "dear boy," too, is grown a sweet youth! They all "desires their duty to you."

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Bristol.

I take the opportunity of Mr. Walker's going to town to send you the correspondence between Mr. —— * and Mr. Crisp. I went to see the hero last night. The published copy of "The Mail-coach" was his subject.† Such a dear fellow! As to the horn in the song, it was just such an attempt as little Walter Terry's would be. He had a man under the temporary stage, evidently in the ventriloquy, which part appeared surprising; and no wonder, for the response was so powerful, so articulate, and so unlike his own guttural sounds, that those who could be imposed upon must have thought, as I should, if I had not immediately discovered the trick, that he was the best ventriloquist in existence. When, however, he was obliged to rely upon himself, with the child in the box, "merciful powers!" the voice for the child literally was not human. When he gave a glass of wine to the figure, and repeated, "God bless the King and Queen, and all the royal family," an immediate uproar began; and the hisses having rather disconcerted him, he bowed low, and, with his peculiarly soothing voice, said, "Ladies and gentlemen, I only speak the author." Oh, if you could have heard him! I was convulsed, knowing that I was the person alluded to, having invented that very original phrase. He is a pot-house sort of man; and Crisp's ill-considered letter raised him some partisans, who supported him with the most unnatural applause. There appeared, if all paid, to be about 25*l.* in the room; but

* A person who *intended* to *pass for* Mr. Mathews, his bills being artfully managed to that effect.

† One of the trumpery impositions already mentioned.—A. M.

Cummins told me he had spoken to the cash-taker of the rooms, who said, this is *all* the money (not much), and there 's plenty of paper. Cummins says, there was not one person of respectability in the room.

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Birmingham, Dec. 12th, 1820.

I opened here last night. The theatre is really beautiful, and the audience were joyous beyond former example, though not so numerous as might have been expected by some. For my part, I told Bunn, it would not do what he hoped; but he would have me: we had 64*l.* On Monday, per pressing invitation, I enact in the Town Hall at Stratford; and, if they will come forward, I shall repeat on the Wednesday, and then off for home. This has been a most harassing and troublesome trip; and had I not made the bargain I have with Crisp, of clear half, I should by this time have been somewhere about raving mad. The impositions at Bristol exceed anything I ever met with. They fell upon poor Crisp. He has stooped his neck to be trod upon, and be insulted, that I might not be irritated and annoyed. That rascal at the Rooms made him pay five guineas for one for which Simpson only paid three, and Flemington only two; and would not let him prepare it for a third night, under 10*l.*!

Two demands I have had made for Mr. *Irish* Mathews; one for the use of 'Merchant Tailors' Hall, Bristol—four weeks—" which doubtless I had forgot — or *you* had forgot to mention it—as I went away before *you*—and *you* promised it should be sent"!!!*

* Here our namesakes had been doing us honour once more. —A. M.

I am very glad to hear Charley is learning short-hand: it must be a most desirable acquisition.

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Stratford, Dec. 18th, 1820.

I arrived here last night. When half-way it began to snow; and I think I never was out in such a punishing day, as Crisp calls it. I am, however, thank God, none the worse for it. I applaud Charles for his modesty: I did not expect more or less from him.* It is unnecessary to say more till I see you. I have the pleasure to tell you that my second night at Birmingham produced 84*l.*!!!!!! Don't stare at the notes of admiration; for it is absolutely agreed by Crisp and Bunn that, "under the circumstances, it is the greatest thing I have ever done." I thought then the thing had done its *do;* but the third and last night produced 135*l.*, giving me for my week 140*l.* Be grateful, as I am; and take this from me, that the thing is not over anywhere. It is still as warm as *ever,* and will last long enough for all hopes and purposes, please God I keep my strength.

C. MATHEWS.

Sanguine as he was with regard to the continuance of his popularity in his Entertainments at this early period, he would have proved an absolute sceptic had any one assured him that his reputation and success would proceed increas-

* Charles had been asked whether he felt competent to make a drawing and plan for a monument.—A. M.

ingly for fourteen years after, and then only cease —with his life!

Mr. Mathews had for some time past set his heart upon promoting, by a public subscription, the erection of a monument to Shakspeare in his native place; and his present visit there was chiefly on this account.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Stratford, Dec. 19th, 1820.

I have just returned from the Town Hall. Would that thou couldst have seen me! Unprepared, unarranged, I rushed before them: I opened my plans, my proposals; and, in an extempore speech, gained the applauses of "Ladies and Gentlemen." *L'affaire est fini.* Two clergymen (one of them Dr. Davenport, the vicar) joined their names to mine as parties concerned. Subscriptions were immediately offered, a committee formed, and the town half on fire already. Would you believe it, the first propitious circumstance on our arrival, the first thing we heard, was, that the site of Shakspeare's house, New-place, where he died, and where the mulberry-tree grew, is to be disposed of? I have got myself into a notoriety that I did not seek or expect. I was voted treasurer by acclamation; and, when the meeting was over, a private communication was made to me that the corporation wished to bestow some mark of their favour upon me — would I like the freedom? — in short, "what was done for Garrick ought to be done for me." I declined all notice till the affair, at all events, was completed.

C. MATHEWS.

The following account of this meeting appeared at the time:—

Agreeably to the suggestion of Mr. Mathews, a meeting of the inhabitants of Stratford-upon-Avon was held at the Town Hall, on the 19th of December, 1820, to consider of the best mode of erecting, in the form of a theatre, a national monument to the immortal memory of Shakspeare.

Upon this occasion Captain Saunders took the chair.

Mr. Mathews stated, at considerable length, the object of calling the meeting. It had long been a subject of regret to the literary and dramatic world, he observed, that a town so distinguished as the birthplace of Shakspeare should not possess some token of national respect and gratitude to such an immortal genius. In other towns similar instances had occurred under far less imperative reasons. On the Calton-hill, near Edinburgh, a monument had been erected to the memory of Hume the historian; at Dumfries a mausoleum had been raised by the inhabitants to commemorate their poet Burns. But the only tribute worthy of notice to the memory of Shakspeare, was privately erected by Garrick, in his own garden at Hampton. He was desirous of stating that, in coming forward on the present occasion, he had anything but interested views. He was ready to go hand and heart into the business: he would apply personally to all he knew; he would even endeavour, through the medium of those most distinguished members of the Royal Family, who had ever patronised the arts in general, and, above all, the drama, to lay this proposition at the foot of the throne; and he felt the fullest confidence that our gracious monarch would give his patronage and purse to the completion of this object. He would, moreover, exert what influence he possessed with every man of rank and talent, every poet, artist, and

sculptor, whom he was fortunate enough to know, to aid this important undertaking. He particularly impressed on their minds that he did not wish at all to tax any person against his inclination or means. It would be the proudest boast of any person's life to say, in after times, when passing by this building, "Ay, I had a hand in that." All this he left entirely to their own ideas. But, above all, he begged their strenuous and united exertions in a cause so important to the literary and dramatic character of the whole country.

It was resolved unanimously—

That Charles Mathews, Esq. be hereby appointed president and treasurer of the committees.

It was further resolved unanimously—

That a committee of management in London be formed under the direction of Mr. Mathews, who shall have power to embody the same and enlarge it *ad libitum*.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Bury, Jan. 29th, 1821.

I have just arrived here on my way to Ipswich, and stay to-night; therefore snatch the opportunity of saying I am quite well, that I received your kind long letter yesterday, and that I am in high feather. I expect a letter from you at Ipswich, when I arrive in the morning; if not, write by return, and acknowledge the money sent by General Phipps.

Have you read "Kenilworth?"—though I don't know how you should. Only think of my good fortune! Having studied every word of the matter I brought with me, and unfortunately having no more, I was miserable at the

prospect of an evening without a book. On Friday I went to a library, which had all the usual trash, and, without hope, asked for "Kenilworth." The man said he had lent it only two hours before, and it was not even cut up—"what a pity I was not sooner!" but he would send to the lady, and say it was for me, and perhaps she would give it up, if I would promise to finish the first volume that night. I *did*, and *she did*. Good woman! I read from six o'clock till three o'clock in the morning, and got into the middle of the third volume. Was not this a treat? But more, I forced —— to read for once, the only time I ever saw him. Got him "Mid Lothian;" and, as he knows nothing of the novels but through the means of Terry and Pocock,* it was an event. He only went to sleep twice, and actually read till half-past eleven! when he went to bed, leaving me up to my chin in delight.

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Colchester, Feb. 1st, 1821.

I have been *forced* into playing two nights following; which I told you I would not do again. Only conceive my surprise when I arrived at Ipswich on Monday night, at finding myself advertised for Wednesday, when I had fixed Thursday. The printer "had taken the liberty of altering the night!" What think you of that? George, Crisp, myself, and above all the poor mare, doomed to fatigue, hurry scurry, and the bustle of travelling and playing the same night. These idiots here served me the same trick

* These gentlemen dramatized "Guy Mannering" and "Rob Roy."—A. M.

before. Defend me from fools; I prefer rascals. This fellow was one of the cool ones, too, that would not be affronted when I *tried* to insult him. I only wish all of that breed could be kept out of my way.

I am, however, in great health, thank God, and have walked to-day seven miles "with my lame leg." I return to-morrow to Ipswich.

C. MATHEWS.

It is a very melancholy fact, that Mr. Mathews was not originally altogether lame from his accident, as is evident from the circumstance of his notice in the foregoing letter of his seven miles' walk. Had he been satisfied with the partial cure which had been effected, it would have been a great blessing to him and to those who loved him; but not finding his natural activity entirely restored, he was restless and anxious about it, always believing himself so *nearly well* as to feel he could not be far removed from entire recovery. This feeling operated so constantly that it induced many experiments, which ultimately rendered it a painful effort to him to walk only a *few yards.*

In March of this year the following paragraph appeared in the papers, the forerunner of many of a similar kind :—

It is reported that a gentleman of great comic celebrity in the theatrical world is shortly to ascend in a balloon. Whether the object be to satisfy a curious and inquiring mind—

"To catch the manners living as *they rise,*"

we know not; but must express our decided disapprobation of such a hazardous undertaking; which might be the means of depriving the public of the gratification always received from his unrivalled talents. Should this meet his eye, he will not think the worse of us for the suggestion.

In explanation of this report it is necessary to relate, that Mr. Mathews had long entertained a desire to ascend in a balloon; and falling in with a person of the name of Livingstone, who was speculating upon sending one up from London, Mr. Mathews actually promised, under pain of a heavy penalty in case of failure, to go up with him in the spring of this year. Upon learning this, the idea immediately occurred to the manager, Mr. Arnold, that such an event would give a pleasant and popular subject and title to the next entertainment; and consequently, every preparation was made in reference to the expected adventure; but my consent was wanting. At first I had only faintly opposed what I really conceived to be an intimation made jestingly; but, unluckily, this apparent indifference about the undertaking induced my husband thus fearlessly to bind himself. When, however, he came to town, and declared his serious intention, and his positive agreement with Mr. Livingstone, I urged him to give up the project at any loss; for that I never could consent to what seemed to me so hazardous an experiment. The

consequence was, that the design, after a fruitless struggle to conquer my objections, was reluctantly given up, and the fine paid (a considerable one), for the owner of the balloon had great expectations of profit from so remarkable an aeronaut.

CHAPTER VIII.

Announcement of Mr. Mathews's Adventures in Air, Earth, and Water.—Account of these Adventures.—Address on the close of the Fourth Season of Mr. Mathews's Entertainments. —Whimsical Mistake.—Mrs. Siddons in Nell in the "Devil to Pay," and Mr. John Kemble as Falstaff.—Anecdotes of Mr. Coleridge and Mr. Charles Lamb.—Letter of Mr. Coleridge to Mr. Mathews.

THE relinquishment by Mr. Mathews of his design of ascending in a balloon, greatly disappointed public expectation, and frustrated in some measure the arrangements for the next "At Home." The proprietor of the theatre, therefore, found it expedient, in the form of advertisements, to follow up the reports of Mr. Mathews's intention by an affected and playful belief of his ascent. Many ingenious intimations were to be seen, in the papers and elsewhere, for a week or two previously to the re-opening of the English Opera House, which served as announcements of his

ADVENTURES IN AIR, EARTH, AND WATER.

FOUND.—MR. MATHEWS.

Who (having been out of his element) will be *found* again At Home, (for the 125th time,) at the Theatre Royal, English

Opera House, Strand, this present Thursday, March 15th, 1821, when it is respectfully announced that he will have the honour to attempt a description of his Travels in

AIR, EARTH, AND WATER!

PART I.—AIR.—Ballooning.—Reasons for rising.—Professional Opinions.—Friends in a Fever.—Mark Mirabel, the Wonderer.—Sentimental Reflections on Sailing.—Major Longbow, the modern Munchausen.—White Lies.—Mr. and Mrs. Guffin.—Mrs. Damper, a Job's Comforter.—Inquisitive Ladies.

Song—*Air Ballooning.*

Lady's Album.—Little Extracts from great Poets.—Autographs.—Monsieur *Arc en Ciel's* Essay on Ballooning!—Odd Sensations on quitting *Terra Firma.*—Putney Bridge and Wandsworth Common.—Patience in a Punt.—Frightening Fish.—Cockney Sportsmen.

Song—*The First of September.*

Re-ascent.—Munchausen *in Nubibus.*—Telescopic Observations.—Chinese Juggler.—Skein of Cotton Thread.—View of Margate.—Speculations on Smoke.

Song—*Steam-Boat.*

PART II.—EARTH.—Margate Pier.—Passengers per Steamer.

Song—*Déjeûné at Saint Peter's.*

Paul Pinnacle, the Quality Tag, and Cutter of Commons—his System shown up.

Song—*High and Humble, What a Jumble!*

Mr. Mathews's Code of Cuts.—Cut Celestial, Cut Infernal, Cut Collateral, Cut Retrospective, and Cut Direct!—Mr. and Mrs. Capsicum.—Barnaby Thwack, the Donkey-Driver.—Danger of Non-aspiration of an H.—Epitaphs in a Churchyard transplanted to an Album.—Dissertation on Dress.—Lodgings to let.—Warm Reception in Close Quarters.—An Attorney's Bill.—Catching a Native.—Tossing in a Carpet.—Daniel O'Rourke—his Dream—his Visit to the Man in the Moon.—Mr. Chick-cherry-clap, the Margate Librarian.

Song—*The Margate Library.*

Return Home.—Finale.

PART III. — WATER. — Mr. Mathews will represent the *Pleasures* of a Sea-voyage in

THE POLLY PACKET.*

Passengers per Polly :—

Mr. Theophilus Tulip, a novice on the ocean.
Mrs. Tulip, his maternal mamma.
Monsieur Jeu-Singe, French artist in dancing-dogs and monkeys.
Isaac Tabinet, a Jew merchant.
Major Longbow, Mr. Mathews, } Aeronauts on their return.
Daniel O'Rourke, Steward of the Polly.
Invisible Captain,
Poultry in the Hold.

N. B. As *three* of the elements have already been intruded upon, in order that the *fourth* may not feel aggrieved, it is necessary to state that a good FIRE is constantly kept in the theatre.

The songs will be accompanied on the piano-forte, by Mr. E. Knight (Pupil to Mr. T. Cooke), who will perform favourite rondos between the parts.

Of these Adventures the following account is worth preservation :—

About the middle of March the dead walls of the metropolis displayed to the wondering gaze of passengers the following placard, in letters of enormous size :—

" £1000 Reward ! — Charles Mathews, Esq. !

" Whereas, it is said, that the above gentleman, actuated by a strange propensity for rising in the world, *left his home*, at Highgate, perpendicularly, on Saturday, in a

* Written by R. B. Peake, Esq.

balloon, and has not since been seen or heard of. If this be fact, there can be no doubt (from his known habits of punctuality) that he will be 'At Home' at the English Opera House on Thursday next, 15th March, when he will probably give the account of his adventures in the air, &c.

"N. B. If he will return to his disconsolate friends (the public), no questions will be asked; and he will, doubtless, in the course of the season receive the above reward."

Much speculation was set on foot by the appearance of this advertisement, and many of those good, easy, well-meaning persons, who never look beyond the surface of anything, read the "quiz" in solemn sadness, commenting very profoundly upon the folly of the aeronaut in thus endangering his precious limbs. The theatre, however, was crowded upon the appointed evening, and Mr. Mathews delighted the audience with a novel entertainment. It opens with the descent of Mathews upon the stage in a balloon; when, taking out his watch, he remarks, "He has, luckily, *landed* at the English Opera House just at the hour appointed for commencing the performances." He then gives his reason for undertaking the aerial excursion. "All his friends had advised him to relinquish his 'At Home,' assuring him, that it was utterly impossible to produce any novelty. He, however, was not to be persuaded; and having 'exhausted worlds,' determined to 'imagine new,' by the assistance of a balloon." Various personages endeavour to alter his resolution; and the arguments they make use of are detailed with exquisite humour. Among them is Mrs. Damper, a "Job's comforter," who, finding him resolved to persevere, details to him, with great exactness, the names of all those who have

perished by falls from balloons. He ascends; and, after meeting with sundry adventures, finds himself upon the banks of the Thames, at Wandsworth. He is here joined by a Major Longbow, a modern Munchausen, whose character is the tit-bit of the entertainment, and is certainly conceived and sustained in most admirable style. It surpasses all that we principally admired in the preceding entertainments; even the *Old Scotch Lady* is not more humorous. This *Major* is everlastingly boasting of his "muscle," and telling outrageous and unblushing falsehoods, clenching every one with the exclamation, "Upon my life it's true! What'll you lay it's a lie?" There is also a *Monsieur Arc en Ciel*, who favours the company with a very learned dissertation on ballooning. At Wandsworth the party meet with *Patience* in a punt, in the shape of *Mr. Job Twaddle*, formerly an eminent hosier in Gutter Lane, who is a most persevering angler, and in the course of a fortnight had the good fortune to meet with one *nibble* and one *bite!* We never saw anything more laughable and true to nature than the way in which Mathews imitates the old gentleman's manner of examining his various lines, and his desponding shake of the head when he finds he is not likely to meet with any sport. *Mr. Twaddle* is a decided enemy to steam-boats, and upon being asked "Wherefore?" replies, "They frighten the fish!" He also dislikes bathing, because it "frightens the fish!" And balloons likewise, for the same reason. Upon this, *Longbow* says:—"I advise you, sir, never to show your face in the water."—"Why so, sir?"—"'Twill frighten the fish,—Upon my life it's true! What'll you lay it's a lie?" Certain cockney sportsmen now approach, and a long burlesque account of their adventures occurs. *Longbow* and *Mathews* now re-ascend, and the *Major* indulges in some of his usual hy-

perboles, when the travellers arrive in sight of Margate; and the sight of the steam-packet induces a very happy caricature of the humours of the vessel, in mingled recitation and singing. They then descend, and thus finishes the first Part.

Part II. commences with a description of the gaieties of Margate, and a *déjeûné* at St. Peter's. Several of the visiters pass in review; amongst whom is a notorious dinner-hunter, or feaster at other people's expense. "That man can drink a great deal; can't he?" says some one. "Oh! yes, any *given* quantity," is the reply. After him comes *Mr.* and *Mrs. Capsicum*, vulgar citizens, and *Paul Pinnacle*, a would-be fashionable, who spends his life in courting the society of great people, and thinks more about the House of Lords than he does of the Lord's house. This character is very elaborately described, and is evidently drawn from life. His directions for "cutting," though the idea is not new, are highly diverting. In the next place, Mathews accompanies to the churchyard a young lady, who carries a magnificent Album, in which she collects autographs and epitaphs. Of the former she has, among others, that of Sam Swab, the steersman of the steam-packet; and amongst the latter, the well-known lamentation, "Afflictions sore long time I bore," &c. She also has "An Original Poem, by Lord Byron," commencing, "My name, d'ye see, 's Tom Tough, and I 've seen a little sarvice;" and some verses by Rogers, the first couplet of which is—

> "I am a brisk and sprightly lad,
> And just come home from sea, sir!"

On his return from the churchyard, Mathews meets with an old acquaintance, in the form of *Daniel O'Rourke*, who was introduced in the "Trip to Paris." A whimsical de-

tail of *Daniel's* adventures since that period follows; and the piece terminates with the picture of a Margate library, and the embarkation on board the packet to return to London.

Thus far all has been mere description; but, in the third Part, Mathews again undertakes that rapid assumption of characters, in which he is so perfectly unrivalled. The stage represents the cabin of the packet, with the berths, holds, &c. In the first place, he enters as *Daniel O'Rourke*, who has obtained the situation of steward to the Polly Packet. After much laughable singing and soliloquizing, the performer's powers of ventriloquism are called into service, and the captain's voice is heard upon deck, calling for *Daniel* to come aloft. He ascends, and in a moment re-enters as *Mrs. Tulip*, a lusty sensitive dame, who expresses much disgust at the inconvenience of the packet, and alarm for the safety of her darling boy. After which she retires to the ladies' apartment. She is succeeded by *Major Longbow*, who, as usual, boasts of his "muscle!" tells the accustomed lies, and then descends into the hold. After him comes *Mons. Jeu-Singe*, a Frenchman, proprietor of an establishment for dancing dogs, who takes refuge in one of the berths, and is followed by *Isaac Tabinet*, a Jewish smuggler, by whom another of the berths is occupied. *Master Theophilus Tulip*, an overgrown spoiled urchin, now appears, crying loudly for his "mamma," and labouring under the horrors of sea-sickness. He also seeks a cot; and has scarcely laid himself down, when *Longbow* reascends from the hold. His "muscle," however, has failed him; his stomach, like *Stephano's*, is "not constant," and he is fain to have recourse to his nightcap and pillow. Lastly, Mathews enters in his own person, rallies the *Major* upon his fresh-water

sickness, and terminates his entertainment with a brief address of thanks to the audience.

We will not pretend to say that the two first parts surpass those of former seasons, because we think the wit of those performances cannot well be exceeded; but we assert, without reserve, that the concluding part is much more admirable than that of the preceding year.

The following remarks on Mr. Mathews's genius by a clever writer, ought to find a place here.

Mimicry in a low, and even in a middling degree, is within the reach of the most humble ambition — and very humble it must be; but to arrive at the perfection of the art, to mark the nicest shades and distinctions of manner and character, and at the same time to furnish the persons represented with all that variety of playful humour and inoffensive satire, which runs through Mr. Mathews's personations, must be the result of unwearied study, combined with a quickness of tact and a peculiarity of talent, as rare as it is admirable.

There are two kinds of mimicry: the one simply imitates what it observes; the other observes and combines. It is scarcely necessary to add, that the first is a very common faculty, and frequently belongs to persons in the highest degree ignorant and uninformed. Voyagers mention, that it is very usual for savages to exhibit a peculiar talent for imitation; the very natural result of their enjoyment of the senses in perfection, and quick yet passive reception of external impressions, which is its consequence. This, however, is a very mean attainment, compared with the power which infers a study of all the circumstances leading to peculiarity, and especially of the mental asso-

ciations that either produce singularity of character or spring out of it. Mathews is evidently a professor of the superior school. It is the highest praise, allowing the usual licence for caricature, that although we never *have* seen the beings whom he personifies, that we *might* have seen them. The ability to individualise a general conception is one of the rarest properties of the mind.

Mr. Mathews closed the fourth season of his entertainment on the 14th of June. It maintained its wonted attraction even to the close, the house not only being well, but fashionably attended. At the termination of the night's performance, Mr. Mathews delivered the following farewell address :—

" Ladies and gentlemen, — It has been said, and I believe truly, that every man, however gifted with talents and enlightened by learning, has some point in his character open to the attacks of flattery, and accessible to the assaults of vanity. To partake of this weakness, therefore, in common with the clever and the wise, can scarcely reflect disgrace upon any one. Be this as it may, I freely acknowledge myself, albeit neither learned nor wise, to be in the highest degree vain, and to the greatest extent susceptible of flattery. The flattery of which I speak is your undiminished approbation and applause; and the vanity which I think so excusable as to make it my boast arises from the belief, that no man by his own single exertions ever was so fortunate as to excite the public notice and attention for so long a period as I have had the happiness of exciting yours. This evening will close the *hundred and sixtieth performance!* in which I have

alone stood before you. I may therefore with truth assert, what few individuals can assert so truly, that I have passed a hundred and sixty evenings with unmixed pleasure; for I have seen nothing around me but cheerful happy faces. If this world be indeed, as we are told it is, a world of trouble and care, how gratified should *he* feel, who (for a few hours at least) can banish those demons from the hearts of his friends! Believing, as my vanity (*pardonable* vanity, I trust) induces me to believe, that I have been the happy means of accomplishing this desirable end, I confess, my gratification will be unbounded and complete, provided you allow me the pleasure of anticipating as cheerful a meeting next year; and, in the mean time accept, with gracious kindness, my heartfelt thanks and most respectful farewell!"

"Not only next year," observes a contemporary writer, "but in many succeeding years, we hope to enjoy the pleasure of finding this merry philosopher 'At Home,' so agreeably does he put blue devils to confusion by satirising the follies and absurdities of mankind. The extraordinary success of his novel performance will constitute a curious incident in the stage-history of these times; and we pride ourselves not a little upon the reflection that the compiler of such a history, will find the most copious and satisfactory accounts of it in the volumes of the 'British Stage.'"

"The several parts of this year's entertainment having already been fully noticed, we need not return to the subject; but we cannot take our leave of *Major Longbow*, the *crack* personage of the drama, without a word of admiration at parting. Not even the original Munchausen ever made us laugh so heartily as this, his worthy successor. To give our country readers some idea of the

character, we annex a specimen of his stories; though, of course, *upon paper* it loses half its effect. Some one observes that 'the weather is very hot;' upon which the *Major* exclaims, 'Hot! What d'ye call hot? Pho — nonsense! Why, I've been in countries where salamanders dropped down dead with the heat of the sun. I dined one day with a friend and his wife at Callimahammaquackadelore, near Cudderapoo. Well, after dinner, as we were taking our wine, a *coup de soleil* struck the lady, and in a moment reduced her to a heap of ashes! I, of course, was much shocked; but my friend, who was quite accustomed to such accidents, coolly rang the bell, and said to the servant, 'Kit, my gar, and consumar, hitheratoo jumma chaudra put;' which means, in plain English, 'Bring fresh glasses, and sweep away your mistress!'"

In the Lent of this year a whimsical mistake occurred, in consequence of the stage of the English Opera House being occupied on alternate nights by Mr. Mathews, with his "Lecture on Men and Manners;" and by Mr. Bartley with his lecture on the "Structure of the Universe." This change from "gay to grave," probably caused more mistakes than the one I now relate.

It appeared that the editor of a newspaper, having been prevented by illness, or some other cause, from writing a criticism on Mr. Mathews's Entertainment of this season, and wishing to give some notice of it, requested an intelligent Scotch friend, who had visited London for the first time, to go to the English Opera House, for the double pur-

pose of enjoying the performance, and afterwards, of furnishing an account of it for publication.

On the following morning, when the Scotchman entered his friend's office, he was questioned as to his impressions with regard to the preceding night's exhibition. He owned he had been disappointed by it; he expected more comicality than he discovered in Mr. Mathews, whom he had never seen before. The subject, he said, was not made so much of as it might have been; there were no jokes, no opportunities for him to display drollery; in fact, he was disappointed.

The editor expressed surprise, and asked whether the songs were not good? He was told that there were no songs, and what music there was introduced was of a very grave character. This was a puzzle. "Well—but the rest of the audience were amused, I suppose, though you were not?"—"No: they smiled occasionally; but we were all frozen. The house was thinly attended; and, even had there been cause, we were too cold to laugh; but, in fact, there was nothing to laugh at."—"Is it possible that you did not think Mathews a very droll person?"—"Oh dear no; quite the contrary: he was very gentlemanlike, but very far from droll. I never heard a more sensible delivery, or a better voice; but he was not *comical*, or what I expected."—"Oh!" said the editor, "he must have been ill."—"He did not *look ill*; on the contrary, he was fat and jolly in

appearance."—"Fat! well, he must have altered very much since last year, then. Are you sure you were at the right theatre, and that it was really Mathews you saw?"—"Oh! yes, no doubt of it. The name of his entertainment was "Earth, Air, and Water;" those were the subjects he professed to treat of, and he delivered all he had to say very well; but it was not *comical:* a mere matter of fact production, and very dull. I did not wait to hear it out."

The editor paused: "A dull entertainment—no songs — a thin house — a *fat* matter-of-fact Mathews!"—all this was inconceivable. At last he remembered the alternate exhibitions, and at once saw through the mistake; and, without explaining it to his Scotch friend, he induced him (with some difficulty) to go again that night, in order to try a second impression, and give it a fair hearing to the very end.

The result of his second visit was his appearance at the supper table of his friend in a state of excitement and delight at his evening's amusement; he had almost been deafened by the shouts of laughter in which he had joined, almost pressed to death by the crowd, and nearly suffocated by the heat.

On further questioning him about the preceding night's experiment, he owned that as soon as the first portion of the subject was ended, he had left the theatre; satisfied that he had seen enough of

Mathews's fun in the description so excellently given by Mr. Bartley, of the formation of the terrestrial globe, which afforded no ground to be comical upon, and was delivered too well to be *laughed at* by his auditors.

The following letter from Mr. Perry I am induced to insert, because it establishes a curious fact in dramatic history, not less remarkable than Mrs. Siddons's performance of *Nell* in the "Devil to Pay," during her great tragic reputation. I retain a perfect recollection of an account of this attempt, related by a gentleman of York, who had been present on the occasion, which was for her own benefit, in Dublin, about 1801 or 1802, and more "*heavy lightness*" or "*serious vanity*" never was exhibited, according to him. But it answered its professed aim, that of attracting a great house; which, however, her splendid powers in her own magnificent style must surely have insured. I have some reason to believe that Mrs. Siddons was addicted to drollery. As a proof of this, she was very fond, in private society, of adding, like the *Old Scotch Lady*, "her little mite to the conviviality of the evening," by singing, with tristful countenance, the burlesque song called "Billy Taylor;" and I will venture the assertion, from many evidences, that both Mrs. Siddons and Mr. John Kemble had a bias, I may say a great leaning, towards comedy. Mr. Kemble, every body knows, harboured an intention (a

serious intention I may call it) of performing *Falstaff* not long before his retirement, and rehearsed it several times. Happily for his reputation, the idea was abandoned.

TO CHARLES MATHEWS, ESQ.

MY DEAR SIR, Tavistock Square, April 26th, 1821.

Permit me to request your acceptance of two MSS. The first is the part of *Nell* in the "Devil to pay," in the hand-writing of Mrs. Siddons. It is authenticated by Mr. Charles Bonnor, whose hand-writing you will see at the upper corner. The second* is the part of *Aubrey* in "The Fashionable Lover," marked by Mr. Barry for his own study, to remind him where he should lay the emphasis. It is questionable whether this was done by himself, or for him. I am aware that these trifles will only derive importance by being made a part of your incomparable collection.

Believe me to be, my dear Sir,
Your faithful servant,
JAMES PERRY.

Our personal knowledge of Mr. Coleridge commenced in the autumn of the year 1819, after our arrival at Kentish town (or, more properly, High-

* "The second" I well recollect our laughing at very much. Such *scoring* and dividing, and sometimes in such odd places!

If the above letter meet the eyes of the present possessors of these manuscripts, which were sold with the rest of Mr. Mathews's collection of theatrical curiosities, after his death, it will be an additional evidence of their authenticity.—A. M.

gate Hill), when he kindly claimed our acquaintance in the quality of neighbour.*

Many, many delightful hours did Mr. Coleridge's splendid conversation give us and our friends. His kind-heartedness, his beautiful simplicity of manner (for his familiar thoughts and expressions were as admirable as the higher attributes of his vast mind) we really loved, as much as we admired him. My flower-garden proved a very great attraction to him, and he visited it very often, being passionately fond of flowers. As he went he gathered them till his hands were full, repaying me for these floral treasures with the costly gems which fell from his mouth, as the pearls and diamonds were said to have poured from the lips of the good fairy, in the child's tale. He doted upon flowers, and discoursed so poetically upon them, that I frequently regretted my want of power to preserve the many-coloured beauties of his observations. He was so kind, too, whenever kindness was valuable. In illness his manner partook of the tender compassion of a woman; his pity was almost feminine. I remember, on one occasion, after a long confinement, his coming down the hill, one stormy and severe winter's night, to cheer me with an entertaining book—some periodical just published—and sit-

* His letter to Mr. Mathews, at Bristol, in 1814, will be remembered.

ting with me and a friend, who resided with me, in my dressing-room, reading, and commenting upon what he read, until I forgot my indisposition. Indeed I do not know whether he was not a more charming companion when he stooped his magnificent mind to the understanding of the less informed and little gifted, than when he conversed with higher intellects. It is perhaps too bold an assertion, yet I will venture to say that he was not less delightful by such condescensions of his genius, or less esteemed for them. He was exceedingly attached to my husband, always writing and speaking of him as "dear Mathews," and he was equally partial to Charles.

The simplicity of Mr. Coleridge's character on familiar occasions, gave us infinite amusement; which, on his perceiving it, he allowed, with a smile against himself, while some charming remark would increase our enjoyment, and he would leave us with his benevolent features beaming with good-humour and kindness. One invariable result of his earnestly engaging in a long subject of discourse was a total abstraction of mind succeeding to it. In our drawing-room we had placed a large mirror, which reached from the ceiling to the floor, so inserted (without any visible frame) as to seem a continuation of the apartment. On taking leave, morning or night, he generally made an effort to pass through this

glass; and it was our custom always to watch his first movement of departure, in order to be ready to guard against the consequences of an attempt to make his way out through this palpable impediment, and guide him to the door. To all this he would submit, talking and laughing upon the point which prevented his knowledge of outward things, until the entrance-gate was closed upon him.

During the first part of our acquaintance with him, Mr. Coleridge talked much to us of his friend "Charles Lamb," and expressed a strong desire that we should know him. His affectionate manner when speaking of Mr. Lamb, interested us as much for the *man* as for the *writer*, whose published works we had read; and it was at last arranged that we should dine on the fifth of May in this year, at Mr. and Mrs. Gilman's (the intellectual and excellent friends with whom Mr. Coleridge resided), in order to meet this charming person and his amiable sister.

On our reaching Mr. Gilman's house, we found Mr. Coleridge anxiously waiting for Lamb's arrival, and as anxious that Mr. Mathews should be pleased with his friend. Two notes by "Elia" were shown, which Mr. Mathews begged, as additions to his collection of autographs of distinguished persons. The first was addressed to Mr. Coleridge, in reply to his invitation for the day

in question. These notes are too characteristic of the writer to be withheld.*

May 1st.

TO S. T. COLERIDGE, ESQ.

Mr. Gilman's, Highgate.

Dr. C.—I will not fail you on Friday by six, and and Mary, perhaps, earlier. I very much wish to meet "Master Mathew," and am much obliged to the G—s for the opportunity. Our kind respects to them always.—

ELIA.

Extract from a MS. note of S. T. C. in my Beaumont and Fletcher, dated April 17th, 1807.

Midnight.

"God bless you, dear Charles Lamb, I am dying; I feel I have not many weeks left."

The second note was addressed —

TO J. GILMAN, ESQ.

Surgeon, Highgate.

DEAR SIR,

You dine so late on Friday, it will be impossible for us to go home by the eight o'clock stage. Will you oblige us by securing us beds at some house from which a stage

* In a volume of Mr. Coleridge's letters published after his death, one, dated the 3rd of May, mentions this particular occasion in the following words: —"We have a party *to-morrow*, in which, because we believed it would interest you, you stood included. In addition to a neighbour, Robert Sutton, and ourselves, there will be the Mathews (Mr. and Mrs.); 'At Home' Mathews, I mean, and Charles and Mary Lamb." —A. M.

goes to the Bank in the morning? I would write to Coleridge, but cannot think of troubling a dying man with such a request. Yours truly,

C. LAMB.

If the beds in the town are all engaged, in consequence of Mr. Mathews's appearance, a hackney-coach will serve.

Wednesy 2 May, '21.

We shall neither of us come much before the time.

My husband, who was punctuality itself, and all the little party, except the "Elia" and his sister, were assembled. At last, Mr. and Miss Lamb appeared, and Mr. Coleridge led his friend up to my husband with a look which seemed to say, "I pray you, like this fellow." Mr. Lamb's first approach was not prepossessing. His figure was small and mean; and no man certainly was ever less beholden to his tailor. His "bran" new *suit* of black cloth (in which he affected several times during the day to take great pride, and to cherish as a novelty that he had long looked for and wanted) was drolly contrasted with his very rusty silk stockings, shown from his knees, and his much too large *thick* shoes, without polish. His shirt rejoiced in a wide ill-plaited frill, and his very small, tight, white neckcloth was hemmed to a fine point at the ends that formed part of the little bow. His hair was black and sleek, but not formal, and his face the gravest I ever saw, but indicating great intellect, and resembling very much the portraits of King

Charles I. Mr. Coleridge was very anxious about his *pet* Lamb's first impression upon my husband, which I believe his friend saw; and guessing that he had been extolled, he mischievously resolved to thwart his panegyrist, disappoint the strangers, and altogether to upset the suspected plan of showing him off. The *lamb*, in fact, would not consent to be made a *lion* of, and it followed that he became puerile and annoying all the day, to Mr. Coleridge's visible mortification. Before dinner he was suspicious and silent, as if he was taking measure of the man he came to meet, and about whom he seemed very curious. Dinner, however, opened his lips for more than one purpose; and the first glass of wine (enough at all times, as we afterwards found, to touch if not shake his brain) set his spirit free, and he became quite impracticable. He made the most absurd puns and ridiculous jokes, and almost harassed Coleridge out of his self-complacency, though he managed to maintain a tolerable degree of evenness with his tormentor, now and then only rebuking him mildly for what he termed "such unworthy trifling." This only served to exasperate the perverse humour of him it was intended to subdue; and once Mr. Coleridge exclaimed meekly, after some very bad joke: "Charles Lamb, I'm *ashamed* of you!"—a reproof which produced only an impatient "You be hanged!" from the reproved; and another jest,

"more potent than the former," was superadded to his punning enormities.

Mr. Lamb's last fire, however, was at length expended, and Mr. Coleridge took advantage of a pause to introduce some topic that might divert the party from his friend's determined foolery. He chose a subject which he deemed unlikely, if not impossible, for Lamb to interrupt with a jest. Mr. Coleridge stated, that he had originally been intended for the pulpit, and had taken orders; nay, had actually preached several times. At this moment fancying he saw something in Lamb's face that denoted a lucid interval, and wishing to turn him back from the nonsense which had so "spoiled the pleasure of the time," with a desire also to conciliate the "pouting boy," as he seemed, (who, to *our* observation, was only waiting for an opportunity to revenge himself upon his friend for all the grave checks he had given to his jocular vein during dinner,) Coleridge turned benignly towards him, and observed — "Charles Lamb, I believe you never heard me *preach?*" As if concentrating his pent-up resentment and pique into one focus, and with less of his wonted hesitation, Lamb replied, with great emphasis, "I *ne-ever* heard you do anything *else!*"

Our first day with the amiable "Elia" was certainly unlucky. We knew him, however, better in after-time, and coveted and loved his

society as much as everybody did who had time given them to know him; but he "would have his humour."

One day Mr. Lamb told us the following story of himself. He was at one part of his life ordered to the sea-side for the benefit of bathing; but not possessing strength of nerve sufficient to throw himself into the water, he necessarily yielded his small person up to the discretion of two men to "plunge him." On the first morning, having prepared for immersion, he placed himself not without trepidation between these huge creatures, meaning to give the previously requisite instructions, which his particular case required; but, from the very agitated state he was in, from terror of what he might possibly "suffer" from a "sea-change," his unfortunate impediment of speech became greater than usual; and this infirmity prevented his directions being as prompt as was necessary. Standing, therefore, with a man at either elbow, he began: "I—I—I 'm to be di—i—*ipp*ed." The men answered the instruction with a ready "*Yes, sir!*" and in they soused him! As soon as he rose, and could regain a portion of his lost breath, he stammered out as before, "I—I—I—I 'm to be di—i—*ipp*ed!" Another hearty *Yes, sir!*" and down he went a second time. Again he rose; and then with a struggle, (to which the men were too much used on such occasions to heed,)

he made an effort for freedom; but not succeeding, he articulated as at first, "I—I—I 'm to be di—i—*ipp*ed"—"*Yes, sir!*" and to the bottom he went again; when Lamb, rising for the third time to the surface, shouted out in desperate energy, "O—O—only *once!*"

TO MR. MATHEWS.

Extempore on rising from my seat at the close of "At Home," on Saturday night:—

> "If, in whatever decks this earthly ball,
> 'Tis still great Mother Nature — *one in all!*
> Hence Mathews needs must be her genuine son,
> A second Nature, that acts ALL IN ONE.
>
> S. T. COLERIDGE.

I have been reducing a few thoughts of my own, excited by my Saturday night's feast, to some sort of shape in my own mind; and, if I should find courage enough to transfer them to paper for your perusal, my principal, if not my sole object will be to rectify, or to confirm my own judgment, by bringing it into contact with the touchstone of your observation and experience. I have seen enough of mankind to feel little apprehension of offending *you* by sincerity, for men are tolerant of blame in proportion as they are secure of admiration; even if I had, as is not the case, found anything in your performance to be censured. But I am not equally confident, that in some of my notices, as to the *order* of excellence in the different parts of the performance, considered independent of yourself, and even exclusive, (and, permit me to say, without suspicion of flattery, that this excludes the *very* finest

parts of the "At Home,") I might not offend others, and even give you pain as their friend.

I must, therefore, bargain, that, as I shall submit what I wrote to no eye but yours, so you will consider the same in the light of a *tête-à-tête* conversation, having this particular advantage, that you may listen to it just at your leisure, or not at all. Be assured that I shall have strangely perverted and misrepresented my own mind and feelings, if you do not recognise in my remarks the unfeigned admiration and regard with which I am,

Dear sir, your obliged

S. T. Coleridge.*

My best respects to Mrs. Mathews and to your son.

* The remarks alluded to in the above letter, I regret to say, I have not been able to find.—A. M.

CHAPTER IX.

Mr. Mathews's Zeal with Regard to the Erection of the Shakspeare Monument. — Letters on this Subject from royal, noble, and other Personages. — Mr. Mathews and the celebrated Dwarf, Count Boruwlaski.—Description of the Count when a young Man. — His Visit to Ivy Cottage. — Mr. Mathews's Attempt to procure an Interview for the Count with George IV. — The Visit to Carlton House. — Reception of Boruwlaski and Mr. Mathews by the King. — Conversation of his Majesty with the Count. — The King's Inquiries of Mr. Mathews as to the Circumstances of Boruwlaski. — The Count and the King's dying Servant. — The King's Present to Boruwlaski.—Mr. Patmore's Description of the Count.

About this time Mr. Mathews's hopes with regard to the erection of the Shakspeare monument became much strengthened. His heart indeed was deeply interested in the accomplishment of this object. The following letters, addressed to the Earl of Blessington and himself by the royal and noble personages who had been applied to for their patronage and support, warranted Mr. Mathews's expectation of the ultimate realization of his plan. Lord Blessington, with the kindness and good taste for which he was remarkable, had entered warmly into the subject of my husband's wishes, and employed his influ-

ence with most of the distinguished persons, from whom the following letters were received. The manner in which Mr. Mathews's wishes and proposals were answered is too flattering to my feelings not to be recorded in these pages.

TO THE EARL OF BLESSINGTON.

Berkeley Square,
DEAR LORD BLESSINGTON, May 27th, 1821.

I shall be very happy to do anything that can contribute to the honour of Shakspeare; and certainly not the less, if it gives pleasure to Mathews.

I only wish he may be able to satisfy himself and us that a real resemblance of the "peerless bard" can now be erected to his memory; respecting which I am afraid the critics have some most provoking doubts.

Believe me,
Ever faithfully yours,
LANSDOWNE.

TO THE RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF BLESSINGTON.

MY DEAR LORD, Horse Guards, May 28th, 1821.

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, and shall be much obliged to you if you will be so good as to desire Mr. Mathews to call upon me here, next Tuesday, at one o'clock.

Ever, my dear Lord,
Yours most sincerely,
FREDERICK.

TO THE EARL OF BLESSINGTON.

My dear Lord, Woburn Abbey, May 29th, 1821.

I beg you will be assured that I have very great pleasure in obeying your wishes, by becoming a subscriber and vice-president of a Society which has so interesting an object in view as to do honour to the memory of our great dramatic bard; an object which, I am sorry to say, for the credit of our national taste and character, has been too long neglected.

Mathews's zeal on the subject does him infinite credit.

I put myself in your hands, to make any use you please of my name; and I am always, my dear Lord, with perfect truth, Yours most faithfully,

Bedford.

TO THE EARL OF BLESSINGTON.

My dear Lord, June 10th, 1821.

I hope you will excuse my delay in replying to your letter. I shall be happy to subscribe to the monument to Shakspeare, and to give Mr. Mathews my name as one of the vice-presidents.

I have the honour to be,
My dear Lord,
Your sincere humble servant,
Devonshire.

TO CHARLES MATHEWS, ESQ.

Chairman of the Committee of the Shakspeare Society.

St. James's Square,
My dear Mathews, July 8th, 1821.

As it is possible that you have not received Lord Aberdeen's answer, I forward you the inclosed; and I consider

it as some advantage to have the warm support of the President of the Antiquarian Society.

I am very sure that Lord Aberdeen's name will have considerable weight with Lord Liverpool and Lord Bathurst. I think you might write to the latter with great prospect of success, adding Lord Aberdeen's name to those already obtained.

I hope you have written to Lord Warwick, mentioning that you have included his name in the list of vice-presidents.

Lord Clonmel positively declined subscribing when in Warwickshire, and will not *relent*. I had no great expectation in that quarter.

The Earl of Guildford is arrived at his house in St. James's Place; and I think you may rely on him. I would advise a letter forthwith, and think you had better call with it yourself.

You might also address a letter to Lord Jersey, Berkeley Square.

Yours very sincerely,

BLESSINGTON.

TO THE EARL OF BLESSINGTON.

DEAR BLESSINGTON, Argyll House, July 6th, 1821.

I wrote to Mathews when I received your note, in order to say that I should be very happy to become a subscriber to, and vice-president of his Shakspeare Society; but, as I find he has left town, perhaps you will have the goodness to inform him, whenever you may next have communication with him on the subject.

Yours very sincerely,

ABERDEEN.

Last, and not least interesting, is the following, in answer to Mr. Mathews's own application:—

TO MR. MATHEWS.

Mr. Watson* presents his compliments to Mr. Mathews; and having had the honour to submit for his Majesty's consideration the outline of Mr. Mathews's design for the erection of a national monument in veneration of the memory of the great Shakspeare, he has it in command to refer Mr. Mathews to Sir Charles Long,† the paymaster-general of the forces, upon the subject; and to request that he will be pleased to confer with that gentleman, upon the most eligible and most effectual mode of carrying into execution a measure so worthy of the country.

Carlton House, 31st August, 1821.

Upon these and similar promises of support my husband based his most sanguine hopes; which he naturally communicated to his allies at Stratford, through the medium of the mayor elect, a gentleman of great taste and very enthusiastic in the cause, from whom he received the following reply:—

TO C. MATHEWS ESQ.

My dear Sir,

The very agreeable intelligence conveyed by your letter, has revived all our hopes here that something worthy of our great townsman may be accomplished. For myself, I never had a doubt but that your energies would surmount all obstacles, and I really feared precipitancy rather than

* Since, Sir Frederick Watson.

† The late Lord Farnborough.—A. M.

delay. However, you seem now to have got it in a train that must succeed. I should have answered you on the instant; but waited to show the contents of your letter to all your well-wishers here, and tell you the result, which is easily summed up in the general satisfaction expressed by all at the great pains you have taken, and the success that has accrued from the prudent direction you have given them. We have been much gratified by knowing the good terms on which our noble and worthy friend Lord Blessington appears to have been with the Duke of Kent at the public dinner. We are to have a corporation dinner here on Thursday next, which will do much good, as it will keep the thing alive amongst our old dons, who are now pretty well excited. I wish to my soul you could join us on that day: all here are ready to receive you with open arms. The favourite site is still to be had on good and equitable terms; and we only await your farther kind communications to make an offer. Your time I know is valuable; and yet I must trespass on it by intreating a line when you have anything desirable to impart to the Stratfordians.

Heartily wishing you success in all your undertakings, believe me, my dear Sir,

Yours, very faithfully,

JAMES SAUNDERS.

Stratford-on-Avon, June 8th, 1821.

TO C. MATHEWS, ESQ.

SIR, Grosvenor Place, May 20, 1822.

If I hesitate in returning a favourable answer to the request of your letter, it is not that I am insensible to the glory of Shakspeare, nor that I do not feel the propriety

of your object, provided it can be guarded by certain restrictions, which I shall take the liberty of explaining to you.

I consider the fame and genius of Shakspeare to be the property of the whole kingdom, and I cannot consent to confine it to the town of Stratford, although distinguished by having been the place of his birth. I therefore hope that the statue may be placed in the metropolis; and, if the subscription be sufficient, that a duplicate may be sent to Stratford; but, at all events, a cast.

I must also consider this subject with reference to the present state of British art. I have seen monuments to our fallen heroes, executed at the public expense, which appear to me to disgrace it. I now see one of our best sculptors, for whose character I feel great regard, as well as great admiration of his talents, abandoning his own just pretensions, and submitting to great labour in making a cast from an ancient statue, imperfect in its proportions, and in which I can trace no connexion of sentiment with the great and truly national objects for which it is intended. I see subjects the most interesting to British feelings improperly seized upon; and in one instance, which is completed, very unsatisfactorily executed.

I shall therefore engage in no work of art, unless I am satisfied that it will be entrusted to some one of our most eminent sculptors; and I think it would be an act of meanness in me if I did not insist on this condition, under the conviction, which is fixed on my mind, that if sufficient encouragement and opportunity are given to their exertions in original conceptions, they will prove themselves to be at least equal to any artists that now exist, and perhaps not inferior to any that have existed, and whose works are still the admiration of the world. At all events, I

think that the British public ought to feel great obligation to you for the trouble you have taken to promote an object which so well deserves their attention and protection.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient humble servant,

EGREMONT.

TO C. MATHEWS, ESQ.

Lord Spencer presents his compliments to Mr. Mathews, and willingly consents to add his name to the list of persons contributing towards a monument at Stratford-on-Avon to the memory of our immortal poet. He will, however, defer fixing the amount of his subscription till he shall be informed further on the subject.

Spencer House, 30th June, 1822.

TO C. MATHEWS, ESQ.

SIR,

I have to acknowledge the favour of your letter of the 28th ult., and its inclosure; and very willingly add my name to the list of vice-presidents for the erection of a monument to Shakspeare at Stratford on Avon.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

WHITWORTH.

Knole, July 1st, 1822.

TO C. MATHEWS, ESQ.

SIR, Berkeley Square, 29th May, 1822.

I have received your letter of yesterday, and request that you will acquaint the committee formed for the purpose of

erecting a monument to the memory of Shakspeare at Stratford-on-Avon, that I consent with great pleasure to have my name added to the list of vice-presidents.

I am, Sir, your very obedient servant,

DARTMOUTH.

TO CHARLES MATHEWS, ESQ.

MY DEAR SIR,

I received your joyful treat yesterday, and was taken up the whole day in imparting its contents to the admirers of Shakspeare and yourself. I dined with Sir Grey Skipwith, who was highly gratified at our present prospects, through your exertions. He suggested the propriety of Wheeler's calling our committee (here) together on Tuesday next, and of my thus writing to you in the mean time, requesting you to send down any queries, or points requiring information hence, as to localities, &c. for your London committee, which we will answer in form, or send up a person authorized to give such intelligence on these subjects as may be desirable to our friends in London.

For myself, I should be delighted with the task; but would naturally wish to proceed with the sanction and consent of the Shakspearian committee, lest they should deem me officious, or disposed to take too much on myself without their approval. However, believe me the ardent and disinterested servant of the cause, and that I am anxious to do the most required of me.

His Majesty's good taste and munificence were never questionable here; his knowledge of and interest for the town and the memory of our glorious townsman, must give a grateful impulse to our personal attachment to himself, as well as to our ancient and proverbial loyalty. The site of our place may combine all the royal wishes as to

contiguity to the Avon and view from the London road; it also possesses great interest from its central situation in the town, at the same time that it is capable of assuming the greatest *rurality* of character. But the grand point is that it was the hallowed ground of the poet's property and residence. I am glad to add that it is still to be had, and at the sum first specified to you.

Lord Middleton's place is still undisposed of; but a new offer is made, and in a most liberal way, by Mr. Lloyd of Willcombe. He will make a free gift in perpetuity of the top of the hill in his grounds nearest Stratford (half a mile), with space for the temple, and surrounding promenade and shrubberies. This is too far from the town. However, Lloyd is actuated by an honourable enthusiasm; and it answers one capital project, that is, we can hold it *in terrorem* against the pretension of high demands for our more favourite situation. We greatly regret the resolution you have formed of going abroad at this glorious crisis; but surely much may be done in forwarding it before your departure. There must be one consolation to your friends—the certainty of expanded fame and increase of prosperity, which all here sincerely wish you.

Believe me, my dear Sir,
Yours, ever sincerely and faithfully,
JAMES SAUNDERS.

Stratford-on-Avon, May 2nd, 1822.

Notwithstanding the many gratifying instances of flattering acquiescence, however, Mr. Mathews found some difficulties by the way, arising from the variety of feelings and views, both with regard to the subject and the persons applied to for their support.

TO C. MATHEWS, ESQ.

My dear Sir, 3rd July, 1821.

I beg leave to acknowledge the receipt of yours, dated the 1st of July. You must pardon me for saying that I cannot think of lending my name to a circumstance of such general theatrical importance without first consulting my brethren of Drury Lane Theatre; and it appears to me somewhat inconsistent that a project which so deeply concerns us all—that of raising a monument to Shakspeare —should be undertaken without the mutual consent and assistance of the two theatres.

Your list of directors, I perceive, is solely confined to the Covent Garden company. If by this is meant the exclusion of the rival theatre from all the honours of the event, I should be doing them the greatest injustice to singularise myself in all matters where their cause needs advocacy. The Drury Lane performers have done me the honour to select me as their representative, and I cannot abuse their confidence by countenancing a subject in which I conceive they are interested, without their full understanding and concurrence.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

Edmund Kean.

TO C. MATHEWS, ESQ.

My dear Sir,

Now do not surmise, from what I am going to say, that I feel lukewarm about the monument for Shakspeare; but as this is a period pregnant with pecuniary proposals from artists, I am afraid of connecting my name with a work of art in the outset, lest I should be numbered with the designing and the sordid.

I dined yesterday in company with Sir T. Lawrence, and had some conversation about the monument. He appeared much inclined to do all he consistently could; but doubted very much whether artists were the proper people to appear in the first notice of a professional work, and thought it would be much more prudent were they called in aid of a committee of gentlemen, and not themselves forming part of the committee in the beginning.

These remarks struck me forcibly; it is a delicate matter; and willing and anxious as I am to give every assistance in celebrating a name that honours our country, I am afraid, were I afterwards to appear as sculptor, it might be said I had promoted the moving of a sum to pay me for my own labours.

I can safely trust all this personal matter in your hands; I should like, however, to have a few minutes' conversation with you before you go into the country, having some half-defined ideas of the monument to communicate to you. Believe me very hearty in the cause, and

Very truly yours,

F. CHANTREY.

The next letter was from Dr. Hook, afterwards Dean of Worcester (brother to Mr. Theodore Hook), a most accomplished and delightful man, now, alas! no more:—

TO C. MATHEWS, ESQ.

Whippingham Court, Isle of Wight,
August 14, 1821.

DEAR SIR,

Having strong suspicions that my brother has not communicated to you my thanks for the very kind manner in

which you fulfilled my wishes respecting the Shakspeare bust, from his neglect in informing me (according to my request) to what amount I am indebted to you in a pecuniary point of view, I am induced to trouble you with this letter, to express my sense of the obligation, and to request the information with which he has neglected to supply me. I have further to request that you will honour my son, Walter Farquhar Hook, and myself by placing us on the list of subscribers to the Stratford monument.

May I be allowed to present my best compliments to Mrs. Mathews, and my most sincere wishes that health of body and mind may long be yours, to enable you to continue your valuable labours in the cause of the drama and dramatic literature.

I have the honour to be, dear Sir,
Most truly yours,
J. Hook.

So few communications remain out of the many received from my husband's distinguished contemporaries, that I cannot prevail upon myself to withhold even one "trivial fond record" from the hands of departed genius. Every line from such persons must be interesting to the reader.

Sir George Beaumont was early our visiter after our coming to London. General Phipps brought him in the first place to see our son Charles, then a little fellow, who bore so perfect a resemblance to Sir Joshua Reynolds's picture of the "Robin Goodfellow," that had he been born in Sir Joshua's time, it might have been supposed that he was the actual study for the subject. Sir

George wished to make a painting of Charles merely as a curiosity, to compare with the print, but somehow the little creature could not be kept quiet long enough for more than a slight sketch. This, however, led to a friendly acquaintance with Sir George, which extended to his latest years.

TO CHARLES MATHEWS, ESQ.

MY DEAR SIR, Grosvenor Square, June 14, 1821.

Great as our disappointment was, I can assure you it was but a secondary consideration, and I sincerely hope, for your own sake, and for the sake of the public, your health will be speedily re-established.

I cannot refrain from enclosing Sir Thomas Lawrence's letter, because it cannot be unpleasant to you to know how your talents are appreciated by such a man, and because it always gives me the highest pleasure to see one man of genius strongly feel, and warmly acknowledge the powers of another.

I am, my dear sir, most faithfully yours,

G. BEAUMONT.

Russell Square, Friday morning.

MY DEAR SIR GEORGE,

I am very sincerely sorry that I am prevented by a prior engagement from the pleasure of waiting on you on Wednesday next, and from enjoying the unequalled amusement that you hold out to me in the society of Mr. Mathews, in whom humour is elevated, as I suppose we both think, by real genius. Pray get him, if possible, to tell the quiet story of "The Irish Watchman and the Drunken

Sailor." It gives a dignity to those guardians of the night, that is not surpassed even by Dogberry himself.

This is true benevolence, to attempt to cater for one's friends when denied the feast ourselves.

I beg my best respects to Lady Beaumont, and remain,

My dear Sir George,

Your obliged and faithful servant,

THOMAS LAWRENCE.

Mr. Mathews, as I have said, was exceedingly partial to that interesting dwarf Count Joseph Boruwlaski. He had first seen him at York, where this amiable and accomplished creature was forced by his necessities to undergo the wretchedness of public exhibition. From the first moment of their meeting they conceived a mutual regard for each other. The Count was quick to perceive that his visiter, unlike the "general," regarded him as a gentleman, forced out of his natural position by all-subduing circumstance, and one, though "out of suits with fortune," not necessarily debased on that account. In a few years after they met again at Liverpool, under similar circumstances; and in 1805 the Count came to London, and was invited occasionally to visit us. This elegant and fascinating person was the delight of all who ever knew him; full of accomplishments and good sense, playful as an infant, and altogether the most charming of companions. Soon after this, the Count having provided little towards his future retirement from a life that shocked the

delicacy of his feelings, and embittered all that period of his existence, purposed to make a voyage to America, that refuge for the destitute, in order to make up a sum which might purchase him an annuity, and allow him to spend his latter days in gentlemanlike leisure. Some amiable ladies, of family and fortune, who had known and loved him, were shocked at the idea of this voyage, and ascertaining from him the sum requisite to accomplish his independence, nobly supplied it; and thus he was made happy for the remainder of his life. These kind friends often visited him years after, at our cottage, when he came to see us, and were most delicately kind and attentive to him, each inviting him to their respective houses a week or two, in turn, during his stay.

Before I proceed with my own account of this elegant little creature, I will bespeak the reader's interest in his favour by a description of him circulated in the year 1760, when he arrived in Paris, a young man, from Poland.*

Mr. Boruwlaski, who came over with the Countess of Humiecska, is twenty-two years of age, and only twenty-eight inches high. He is well-proportioned, and has nothing shocking about him. His eyes are fine and full of fire, his features agreeable, and his physiognomy spirited, indicating the gaiety and sprightliness of his

* This account was sent by Count Tressau, Fellow of the Royal Academy of Sciences to the Society at Paris.—A. M.

mind. He enjoys a perfect state of health, drinks nothing but water, eats little, sleeps well, and can bear a great deal of fatigue. He dances well, and is very nimble. Nature has refused nothing but size to this amiable creature, for which she has made him ample amends by the beauties of his body and mind.

His manner is extremely graceful, and his repartees smart and spirited. He speaks sensibly of what he has seen, and has a very good memory. His judgment is sound, and his heart susceptible of the most tender impressions. He has never shown any passion or ill-nature; is extremely complaisant; loves to be treated with the decorum due to his rank, yet is not offended with those who make free with him on account of his stature.

The father and mother of this little creature did not think him worth bestowing education on; and he probably would have remained ignorant and illiterate if the Countess Humiecska, and a relation of hers, had not, about two years ago, taken him under their protection. Our little gentleman has so well improved that short time, that he writes and reads very well, and understands arithmetic. In four months he learned the German tolerably well, and French sufficiently to express himself with ease and in chosen terms.

In the present year Count Boruwlaski's first visit of any length took place at Ivy Cottage. He had written his Memoirs, which he earnestly desired to present, in person, to his Majesty George IV, who had graciously desired, many years before, that they should be dedicated to him. When the Count first came to England,

he had been much in the society of the Prince of Wales, who always treated him with the most friendly kindness. Mr. Mathews, who really loved the Count, and whose own nature prompted him to give pleasure to all those who seemed in any measure dependent upon others for their gratifications, resolved, if possible, to accomplish the object so earnestly desired by his little friend, whose account of his past intimacy with the Prince justified the hope that an application for a private interview would not be treated coldly. The only drawback to this his hope was the circumstances of the time. The coronation was upon the point of taking place, and the King, whose mind was harassed, and intent upon other cares, then before the public, might be indisposed, nay, unable to grant what otherwise his known condescension and good nature would readily yield. However, my husband, where his heart was interested in the accomplishment of a good-natured purpose, would not easily be deterred by difficulties, and he consequently applied personally to Sir Benjamin (now Lord) Bloomfield, who at once discouraged any expectation of consent from his Majesty, at *such* a crisis, to anything so preposterous (for in this light he professedly viewed the application, and considering the *time,* it must be confessed, with great reason). Mr. Mathews's interview, indeed, ended in a decided negative, as far as Sir Benjamin's interference was concerned,

as he declined mentioning the subject to his illustrious master.

Amongst our numerous visiters to the cottage, (at this period not a few of them, to behold the exquisite little gem it contained,) our friend Mr. Ormsby Gore called one morning. He was enchanted with the Count; and Mr. Mathews mentioned to him the attempt he had made to procure him an interview with the King. Mr. Ormsby Gore immediately offered to mention the business to the Marquis of Conyngham; and the result of this kindness was speedily communicated to my husband in a note from the Marquis; who informed him that his Majesty had expressed great pleasure at the idea of once more beholding his old friend, and requested that Mr. Mathews would accompany the Count to Carlton House the next evening.

At the appointed hour my husband and his little charge presented themselves, and were immediately ushered into the presence of their Sovereign, who was seated in his domestic circle. On the announcement of his expected visiters the King rose from his chair, and met Boruwlaski at the entrance, raising him up in his arms in a kind of embrace, saying, "My dear old friend, how delighted I am to see you!" and then placed the little man upon a sofa. But the Count's loyalty not being to be so satisfied, he descended with the agility of a schoolboy, and

threw himself at his Master's feet, who, however, would not suffer him to remain in that position for a minute, but raised him again upon the sofa. When the Count said something about sitting in the presence of his Sovereign, he was graciously told to "Remember for the time, that there was no King *there!*" Mr. Mathews received his share of the royal courtesy, and was thanked very emphatically by his Majesty for having been the means of giving him the pleasure he at that moment experienced, in once more beholding his friend the Count. In the course of the conversation the Count, addressing the King in French, was told that his English was so good that it was quite unnecessary to speak in any other language; for his Majesty, with his usual tact, easily discerned that he should be a loser in resigning the Count's prettily broken English, which (as he always thought in his native language, and literally translated its idioms) was the most amusing imaginable, and totally distinct from the imperfect English of other foreigners. This made his conversation, with his extraordinary intelligence of mind and vivacity of temperament, extremely entertaining.

The King reminded the Count, that "it was forty years since they had met," adding, "that their last conversation had taken place in the very apartment they were now in;" at the same time asking the Count "whether he recognised it as

such?" The Count, albeit the very essence of politeness, could not recollect what he was in a manner called upon to do, and replied —"No— no, Majesty, not *same*" (bowing very low), "beg pardon, Majesty!"— and was hastily interrupted by the King with —"You are right, Count, quite right—quite *right*, and I am not *wrong*. This is, in *fact*, the same room, but it has undergone so many alterations since you were last in it, and been changed so completely in its fittings up, that it is of course *not* the same that you remember. But, Count, you were married when I knew you: I hope *madame* is still alive, and as well as yourself?"

"Ah, no! Majesty; Isolina die thirty year! *Fine* woman! *sweet, beauty* body!* You have no *idea*, Majesty!"

"I'm sorry to hear of her death. Such a charming person must have been a great loss to you, Count."

"Dat is very true, Majesty. Ind*id*, ind*id* it was great sorrow for me!"

Just at this moment, as it seemed, he recollected that it might be improper to lay further stress upon a melancholy subject on so pleasing a

* The Count had a peculiar way of placing a lagging stress upon the first syllable of his words when they were meant to convey a strong meaning. He always said *body* to express an individual *person*.

visit. Resuming, therefore, a cheerful tone, the Count playfully observed, by way of ending the subject, that "he had throughout life been *great* philo*so*phy," and quoted the Frenchman's epitaph upon *his* departed wife :—

"Ci-gît ma femme ! ah ! qu'elle est bien,
Pour son repos, et pour le mien !"

Which sally surprised the King into a hearty laugh, while everybody else present, in common with Mr. Mathews, doubtless felt that such an allusion to wives might have been made at a more safe moment. Boruwlaski afterwards confessed to my husband that he was himself, though too late, conscious of the impropriety of it at that particular juncture. The royal husband, however, did not seem to notice it further than as a pleasantry, arising naturally out of the subject and the gaiety of the Count's temper.

His Majesty then inquired how old the Count was? and, on being told, with a start of surprise observed: "Count, you are the finest man of your age I ever saw. I wish you could return the compliment."

To which Boruwlaski, not to be outdone in courtesy, ludicrously replied: "O, Majesty, *fine* body ! ind*id*, *in*did ; *beauty* body !"

The King smiled — almost laughed, and then asked whether the Count had not brought him a book?" The little creature replied: "Yes, Majesty," again attempting to kneel while pre-

senting the volume. He was again prevented by his patron, who allowed him to kiss his hand; and turning afterwards to Lady Conyngham, took from her a little case, containing a beautiful miniature watch and seals, attached to a superb chain; the watch exquisitely embossed with jewels. This the King held in one hand, while with the other he received the book, saying—"My dear friend, I shall read and preserve this as long as I live for *your sake;* and in return, I request you will wear and keep this watch for *mine.*"

This was a double source of pride to Boruwlaski; for in his anxiety to see the King he had but one drawback, and that was a fear lest his royal patron should suppose his visit actuated by any mercenary desire in a pecuniary form, which, under his regained power of gentlemanly independence, would have mortified him extremely. The Count said something expressive of his gratification; and the King led him to a distant part of the room, where they spoke in a low tone for some minutes. They then came back, and his Majesty, as if from a sudden recollection, observed aloud:—"Count, I suppose you do not mean to encounter the fatigue and crowd of a coronation; and it would possibly gratify you to see my heavy robes to be worn on the occasion; if so, I will order them to be shown to you?" The Count bowed assent to this courteous and considerate proposal, and orders were given

to conduct Count Boruwlaski where the robes could be displayed for his inspection. Following his conductor, this little miniature of a man left the room, with one of his graceful bows to the King and his suite.

His Majesty then turned his attention to Mr. Mathews, again expressed his satisfaction at the gratification he had given him, declaring he would not have missed the occasion of seeing his dear little friend for the world, for he supposed him to have been dead many years, adding, with something like a sigh, that he reminded him of very happy hours spent in his presence, and he was a most delightful creature. After other commendations, he concluded by saying, "If I had a dozen sons, I could not point out to them a more perfect model of good breeding and elegance than the Count; he really is a most accomplished and charming person!" The rest of the time was filled up in conversation respecting the Count, his quick habits, and whether his circumstances were *really* easy. This last inquiry was made in a lower tone than the others, and with great apparent interest. Mr. Mathews answered, that his little friend was perfectly independent. He then gave his Majesty the following account of the manner in which he, the Count, held his life-annuity, the particulars of which had been detailed to him by the Count himself. A wealthy tradesman of Durham had, upon the Count's

settling in that city, received from him a sum of money to be sunk for a life-annuity. The granter of it believed that he had entered into a very advantageous undertaking, speculating as he did upon the then advanced age of the annuitant, and the general fact that dwarfs are seldom long-lived. But after a time the grocer waxed old (though much the Count's junior), and saw himself increasing in infirmities, while the little grig he had speculated upon burying long before, had outlived the capital upon which his income was secured; and, strange to say, gave no sign of decay. The unlucky old tradesman watched him from year to year with a jealous eye, and found him unaltered and apparently unalterable. Knowing the Count to be a great alchymist, he began probably to suspect that he had acquired by his studies the *elixir vitæ*, while, at the same time, he obtained the more valuable secret of transmuting base metal into gold by his periodical experiments upon the door-knocker of the luckless grocer, whose strong box proved the true philosopher's stone, and supplied the little experimentalist with continual resources. In short, the granter of his annuity believing that the Count bore about a "charmed life," gave up the struggle to outlive him, and died, leaving the little *incumbrance*, like Sinbad's Old Man of the Sea, upon the shoulders of his successor.

Mr. Mathews's relation of this fact and other

anecdotes of his little friend much diverted his Majesty; but had my husband told the story as he learned it, the King might have been still more entertained.

Mr. Mathews was staying many years ago in Durham for a few days, and was walking out one morning, with the Count's little hand in his, when he found himself led into a shop, where an almost imbecile old person was seated. The Count gaily inquired, "Ah, how you do?" A slow shake of the head told an unfavourable tale in return; and the aged man, rather drily, asked how the Count felt himself. To which he answered, with all the glee and vivacity of eighteen, "Oh, *never* better! *quite* vel!" and ran out of the shop from the gaze of the aged man, scarcely able to restrain his merriment till he got out of hearing. He then told Mr. Mathews, during convulsions of laughter, that the person they had just seen was the granter of his annuity.—"Ha! ha! ha! Oh, Mattew, I cannot help! Oh, *poor devel,* poor *hold* body! It *macks me laffing* (it makes me laugh) poor *hold hanimal!* Oh! he say prayer for me die, offen when he *slip.* Oh, you may *depend* — ha! ha! ha! but Boruwlaski *never* die! He *calcoolated dat* dwarf not live it long, *et* I live it forty year to *plag* him—ha! ha! ha!—oh, he is in *hobbel debblishly!* I *tellee dat!* He fifty year *yonger den* Boruwlaski; *mintime* he dead sooner as me. Oh yes, you may sure *dat—dat* is my *oppin-*

non. Boruwlaski *never* die," playfully nodding his little head, " you may *de*pend."

Mr. Mathews asked if the old man had any family (feeling some compassion for his hard case), to which the Count cried out, " Oh! he have it *shildren* twenty, like a pig, poor *devel! mintime* he *riche* body! Oh, he have it *goold, et wast* many bank-*nott! Bote,* he have it *greet prep-pencitty* (propensity) to keep him (it) fast hold, poor idi*ot*! It-*macks me laffin!*"

But, to resume the particulars of the Count's visit to Carlton House. He was absent not much less than an hour, and it was remarkable that during this interval not one word in allusion to my husband's profession, or his individual talents, escaped his Majesty. Nay, it seemed as if he purposely avoided any reference of the kind; and that his superior tact, which was apparent in all he did, rendered him careful not to be *suspected* even, of any sinister intention in this invitation, or a wish upon a private occasion to mix up the actor with the visiter.

At length the little hero of the night re-entered the room. He had evidently been weeping; his deportment was altogether altered, and his manner agitated. The King went up to him; and, taking his small hand within both his own, pressed it fervently, saying, with much significance of tone: " I hope, Count, you have been *interested* in what you have seen?" The Count

could make no reply, otherwise than by a bow, tears rushing down his aged cheeks, so as to require his handkerchief to arrest their course: it was clear that he could not recover his spirits. The King seemed also affected; but, conquering his feeling, told the Count that he had a parting request to make, and pointing to the tiny feet of his guest, added: "My good friend, I must have one of your shoes to place in my cabinet, so pray do not forget to send it to me; *mind,* one that you *have worn.* So, good night! my *dear* old friend! Good night, and God bless you!" Then making a most gracious and kindly inclination of his head to my husband, he said: "Good night to you, Mathews; *good* night! I assure you I am much obliged by your visit. Good night!"

It may be imagined, that Sir Benjamin Bloomfield, who was present during the whole of this scene, did not feel so much pleased and interested in it as the Marquess of Conyngham assuredly did. It was certainly rather awkward for him to witness the result of what he had so pertinaciously refused to assist in bringing about. But his refusal was upon very good grounds, and not to be censured; for who could anticipate at that particular period, that the King would so promptly consent to such an interview, however interesting to his feelings under other circumstances?

When Mr. Mathews and his little charge were

re-seated in the carriage, the latter took his friend's hand and pressed it in silence, his sobs soon explaining that he was affected at the recollection of something more than the mere kindness of his royal patron. At last, and before they reached home, the following facts were revealed: — It appeared that when the King took Boruwlaski aside in the room, he very delicately and earnestly inquired into the state of his resources during his future life, saying, that as he considered he was the Count's oldest friend in this country, he assumed to himself the right to offer whatever might be necessary or desirable for his future comfort, and concluded with a request to be frankly informed what it was in his power to do. The Count with sincerity assured his generous patron that he wanted nothing. (It will be remembered that the King afterwards questioned Mr. Mathews upon the subject, perhaps fearing that the Count, from too much delicacy, had been disingenuous). The King, satisfied on this point, then inquired whether the Count retained any recollection of a favourite valet of his (whom he named) known to him in former years. The Count professed a perfect remembrance of the man. "Well," said the King, "he is now, poor fellow, upon his death-bed. I saw him this morning, and mentioned your expected visit. He expressed a great desire to see you, which I ventured to promise he should do; for I have

such a regard for him that I would gratify his last hours as much as possible. Will you, Count, do me the favour of paying my poor faithful servant a short visit? He is even now expecting you — I hope you will not refuse to indulge a poor, suffering, dying creature." The Count of course expressed his perfect readiness to obey the King's wishes, with much anxiety to please the poor man, and left the room as described.

Boruwlaski was first shown the robes, and then conducted to the chamber of the sick man, which was fitted up with every comfort and care; a nurse and another attendant in waiting upon the sufferer. When the Count was announced, the poor invalid desired to be propped up in his bed. He was so changed by time and sickness that the Count no longer recognised the face with which his memory was familiar. The nurse and attendant having retired into an adjoining room, the dying man (for such he was, and felt himself to be) expressed the great obligation he felt at such a visit, and spoke most gratefully of him whom he designated the *best of masters;* told the Count of all the King's goodness to him, and indeed of his uniform benevolence to all that depended upon him; mentioned that his Majesty during the long course of his poor servant's illness, notwithstanding the circumstances that had agitated himself so long, his numerous duties and

cares, his present anxieties and forthcoming ceremonies, had never omitted to visit his bedside *twice every day*, not for a moment merely, but long enough to soothe and comfort him, and to see that he had everything necessary and desirable, telling him all particulars of himself that were interesting to an old and attached servant and humble friend. This account was so genuine in its style and so affecting in its relation, that it deeply touched the heart of the listener. The dying man, feeling exhaustion, put an end to the interview by telling the Count that he only prayed to live long enough to greet his dear master after his *coronation* — to hear that the ceremony had been performed with due honour, and without any interruption to his dignity — and that then he was ready to die in peace.

Poor Boruwlaski returned to the royal presence, as I have related, utterly subdued by the foregoing scene; upon which every feeling heart will, I am persuaded, make its own comment, unmixed with party spirit or prejudice.

I was at home waiting with some curiosity for the particulars of this interesting evening, when the gate-bell sounded, and before I could suppose that the parties had even gained admittance, I heard the Count *huzza*-ing like a schoolboy on a return home for the holidays. Hastening to meet them, I found my husband seated

in the hall, benevolently smiling at his dear little friend's antics, as he watched them. The Count, who had had time to recover from the melancholy part of the visit, was *dancing* and *pirouetting* about, with the beautiful watch held up above his head for me to notice. Those who may have seen the farce of "Fortune's Frolics," and witnessed the mad delight of the clown at his acquisition of unexpected wealth, may in some measure fancy our dear little pet's extravagant manifestations of wild delight exhibited in this giddy way, partly to make me laugh, partly to throw off those feelings which were too powerful to be restrained within rational bounds; and, if these extravagances need excuse, let the reader remember that they were committed by a *young* gentleman *only* in his eighty-fourth year!

"Look! ma'am; *be*auty watch! *Kind* King. *Good* body! *Sweet* man! Indid, ind*id*, ma'am, he mack it kingum happy" (he 'll make his kingdom happy). "Oh, you may *sure* of *it*."—(Here the Count's tone altered to a graver expression.) —"*Good* body to poor *hold* servant at *hom*. *Good Mas*ter! *da*—t is beauty!" (That is the beauty of it.) *Fine* body! sweet man! Majesty George the Fourth!"*

* In an elaborate article (to which I have recently referred, and from which I shall occasionally give extracts) called "Personal Recollections of Charles Mathews," written by Mr. Patmore, the following account is given of his meeting our little

favourite at this period, at Ivy Cottage. In reference to the diversity of visiters to be found at Ivy Cottage, Mr. Patmore observes:—"I remember meeting at Mathews's house on one and the same day, his Royal Highness the Duke of Sussex, Rowland Stephenson, and the Polish dwarf, Count Boruwlaski. This latter extraordinary personage was an especial pet of Mathews, and the whole of his family; and not without reason, for I think I never saw a more interesting specimen of the human species, an example of our common nature, from the contemplation and study of which more might be learned to soften as well as to strengthen the heart.

"At the time I saw this person at Mathews's he had, I think, nearly reached his eightieth year [he was in his 84th]; yet, in health and symmetry of person, in clearness and quickness of intellect, and in brilliancy and buoyancy of animal spirits, he was like a youth of fifteen, and his conversation was the most entertaining in the world. In the course of his *public* life (at the time I speak of, he had been living for several years in strict retirement, either in or near Durham, on the competency settled upon him many years ago by an English lady of high rank) he had repeatedly visited every court in Europe, had been personally favoured and caressed by their respective sovereigns, male and female, for two or three generations deep, and had something curious and amusing to tell every one of them. But the interest excited by his society was not so much to be found in what he had to tell of other people, however celebrated, as in what he exhibited in the exquisite little microcosm of his own mind and character. It was at once the most curious and the most delightful sight I ever witnessed, to see him domesticated at Mathews's, which he almost always was for several weeks together, when he paid his annual visit to London. He used to go gamboling about the house and grounds like a pretty lap-dog, or playful child, happy as a bird, and, like the birds, for ever uttering his happiness in song. Yet, if he had to meet a stranger, so doing, with the tone and manner of a perfect gentleman, and without the slightest evidence of a consciousness that he was in any degree different from the rest of the world; nor, in fact, was there anything about him to create

even a strange, much less an unpleasant feeling in the minds of others. It was like looking at an exquisite object of virtû, or one of those miracles of mechanism of which we read as having been exhibited throughout Europe about the middle of the last century. He was perfectly straight, upright, well formed and proportioned; yet, when standing on the ground his chin could scarcely have rested on a dining-table of the ordinary height. But what he particularly piqued himself on was the aristocratic smallness of his hands and feet. His shoe, and he always exhibited one as 'a natural curiosity,' when he was staying at Mathews's, was not larger than those usually worn by a girl of six or seven years of age; and a pleasant practical joke, played, I remember, by young Charles Mathews on the most portly of the two celebrated authors of the 'Rejected Addresses' was, to substitute in his dressing-room in the place of *his* trunk, a lilliputian trunk, (of about twelve inches square,) containing an entire dress-suit of the Count's clothes. Then, at meals, it was a pretty thing to see Mrs. Mathews lift up the Count in her arms, and place him by her side in the seat always prepared for him, and sometimes in doing so put a playful kiss upon his delicate little cheek, round the rosy softness of which a profusion of snow-white hair curled and waved like that of a fair child. Nor was there anything in the slightest degree ridiculous or unseemly in all this; on the contrary, there was mixed with the gentle simplicity and child-like innocence of deportment of this extraordinary person a certain air of dignity and propriety, which created an effect at once touching and impressive."

CHAPTER X.

Mr. Mathews's Fondness for the Society of Foreigners.—Naldi, Ambrogetti, Sor. — Droll Translation. —A Foreigner's Compliment.—Count D'Orsay's *Bons Mots.*—Monsieur P——lle and his Wife.—Unreasonable Augmentation to a Family.—Letter to Mrs. Mathews.— A deaf *Auditor.*—Ludicrous Interruption during one of Mr. Mathews's Performances.—A Provincial Lady-Patroness — her Delight and Surprise at Mr. Mathews's Transformations.—Letters to Mrs. Mathews. —Whimsical Perplexities of Mr. Mathews with Tradesmen. —Singular Memorandums.—Letters to Mrs. Mathews.

My husband was exceedingly fond of the society of foreigners; and it was noticeable, that they were all great admirers of him, in public and in private life;—they really loved him. Naldi was particularly fond of his society; and, though he understood English imperfectly, seemed always to comprehend all he said. We were very intimate with Signor Naldi, who invariably addressed my husband—"*Dear* Mat-*hew*!" Naldi liked to talk English; and was always encouraged in this liking by his friend, who never failed, by his management, to elicit something amusing from the practice. The Prince Regent had made him a present of a snuff-box, in consequence of his singing before him on some occasion. Naldi,

who was a refined gentleman in all his ideas, was gratified at this mode of receiving compensation, and wished Mr. Mathews to understand that he was *better* pleased with the present of the snuffbox (on the lid of which appeared the royal donor's portrait) than he should have been had the Prince given him a thousand pounds! This sentiment he conveyed to my husband the next time they met, in his own peculiar way:—"See, *dear* Mat-*hew! dees boox, pr*esente me from de Regent Prince! If I am a tousand pounds I was not so proud as dees boox!"

Ambrogetti's love and admiration had all the character of infantine regard, and used to show itself most amusingly. His English was even worse (or *better*) than Naldi's; for he had not mixed so much in English society as Naldi had done, neither had he been so long in this country. One night, at a supper-table, Ambrogetti was seated next my husband, who was much diverted with his ardent admirer, and the childish delight he exhibited at all Mr. Mathews said or did. My husband took pleasure in exciting his droll expressions, and was surprising him with all sorts of things. At last, Ambrogetti, wrought up to the climax of his wonder, having previously exhausted every known word with which he could express his rapture, cried out, in a transport of delight, embracing him at the same moment, "O, Mat*hew!* you are *my sweetheart!*"

Sor, the guitar player, was another of my

husband's devoted admirers. Meeting Mr. Mathews for the first time at an evening party, he watched and followed him about the room with the fondest attention, listening to all he said with the greatest apparent admiration and enjoyment. At last he contrived to enter into conversation with him, and Mr. Mathews, as usual, with foreigners, led him on to talk in English.

Sor began by complimenting my husband on his extraordinary powers, professing himself his great admirer, and a constant attendant upon him in public. This was at the time Mr. Mathews acted in the drama, before his "At Homes" were contemplated. Sor mentioned the delight he had felt at the last new character he had seen him represent, and laughed over, in his recollection, the points which most amused him; but he could not remember the title of the piece which had so entertained him, although he declared it was one of his greatest favourites. Mr. Mathews suggested several. "Non, non, non," said the perplexed Spaniard, still trying to explain. After many attempts, he at last endeavoured to do this by describing each particular of the dress worn in the piece by Mr. Mathews, who would not assist his memory.

"Cott (coat) *vite?*" (Mr. Mathews shook his head). "Large caps?" (Capes). "De man vis de large buttons, *vite?*" (Still Mr. Mathews affected not to know). "Large hat *vite?* Nossgay!" (Another shake of the head). "Long

veep! (whip). Oh, so droll at long veep!" Mr. Mathews could not but be aware that he meant the farce of "Hit or Miss." At last Sor exclaimed, "Oh, now I know, now I know; I recollect in French de nom! it is 'Frappé ou Mademoiselle!'" This translation may be worthily placed with "La dernière Chemise de L'Amour," from Cibber's play, called "Love's last Shift."

I recollect one night, at the Haymarket Theatre, after Mr. Mathews's performance of "Mr. Wiggins," a distinguished foreigner found his way behind the scenes; and seeing the performer reduced to his own "fair proportions," and dressed for another character, threw up his hands and eyes at the contrast he now presented—from the overfed figure in the first piece to the starveling *Sharp* in the "Lying Valet." The Frenchman was full of compliments; he was enchanted with "Monsieur Viggen," and declared he must hasten back to his box to see him again, although he professed to be almost exhausted with laughter. "I most go to my box to laugh more den I *can*—I never so laugh before," adding, with a low bow, "But indeed you *deserve* to be laughed at by *everybody*."

With regard to the prepossession of foreigners, as I have observed, Mr. Mathews was not a jot behind them in their regard for him, even where nothing of the ludicrous contributed to his stock of enjoyment in their presence. For instance: he

loved Count D'Orsay as much as he admired him. His amiable disposition and extraordinary conversational talent made my husband always happy in his society, while his wit delighted him the more because it was untinged with bitterness. It was my husband's observation that he could enjoy Count D'Orsay's *bons mots* without any qualifying regret, for his witticisms possessed the rare charm of pungency united to good-nature, while his pleasing accent (which, as he understands our language perfectly, is all that proclaims him a native of another country) added effect to his words.

Among the many foreigners with whom Mr. Mathews was intimate was a M. P——lle, who frequently visited us after our marriage. Monsieur P——lle and his wife, a pretty English woman, had been married several years, but no child had blessed the otherwise happy couple. At the time we became acquainted with them, in York, the lady had given promise, and in due time the critical period arrived which was to complete their happiness, as they believed, by a more powerful bond of union. On the evening when this event was expected, and Mons. P——lle hoped to become a father, he invited himself to dinner with us, desiring to divert, if possible, the intensity of his feelings from the little less than agony of suspense which he experienced lest his dearly beloved wife should fall a sacri-

fice to her situation. It was almost impossible, even while witnessing the husband's suffering, not to smile at the ludicrous expression he gave to it. Mr. Mathews urged him to take more wine than the habit of the abstemious Frenchman would have allowed him to drink at any other time; but now he seemed glad to use any artificial means to sustain himself. A second bottle of port had been produced after dinner, before any intelligence from home reached the anxious husband, when lo! as he was sipping a second glass of the newly-opened wine, a servant from home was admitted, almost breathless with haste, and announced that his mistress was "put to bed" with a fine boy! The rapture of the father was as whimsical as had been his dread. He was flying off to see his first-born; but a prudent message from the doctor was added, recommending Mons. P——lle not to return immediately, but to wait, satisfied with present intelligence, until summoned. To this he reluctantly submitted; and, re-seating himself, indulged in his future prospect of added bliss. Nothing had been wanting but a son to perfect the interest of his life; one child was sufficient for their mutual wishes; indeed, as he observed, a large family would not be desirable, or consistent with his means; and, as he and his wife were no longer youthful, it was not probable that any very serious increase to his family circle could be ex-

pected, — he was in fact the happiest of men. After a short interval, the servant appeared once more, to acquaint Monsieur his master that, since his first message, "Mistress had got another bairn!" Surprising was this news, and somewhat *damping*, we thought, to the happiness and satisfaction which the first intelligence so indisputably occasioned. However, after the first ejaculation of surprise, Mons. P——lle inquired how his wife was, and on being again assured that there was nothing to fear, and that he would soon be allowed to see her, he appeared to resign himself to his twofold blessing, observing, "Well, well! it cannot be *pre*vented — it is one more *den* I *ex*pect—*mais* I not *re*pine—two *shildren* at one time is ra-ther inconvenient *et* very expen*sive!* — *mais n'importe!* I cannot help *him*— I *moost* be *re*sign to *it*." In this manner he philosophized while he sipped his wine, looking into the fire, at the same time, in a musing attitude; now and then, however, taking out his watch, and again expressing his anxiety lest his "dear wife" should be in danger. We had some difficulty in preventing him from appearing at his house before the ruling powers there thought proper. A third time his messenger rushed in, more agitated and pale than at first. He appeared to bring fatal news, for his eyes seemed almost bursting from their sockets, and his whole appearance was truly alarming to us all.

"Well?" we simultaneously exclaimed, "how is Madame ——?"—"She's as well as can be expected, doctor says; but—." — "But what?" asked the agitated husband.—"But she's getten anoother bairn!" replied the messenger.—"*Anossere shild!!!*" cried the astonished Frenchman, starting from his chair, and pushing his hair back from his forehead, with a "Wheugh!" as if sudden heat had distressed him. In truth he looked less in sorrow than in anger at this unseasonable augmentation; and, after a second's pause in seeming reflection, he suddenly assumed a resolute manner, as if from a strong effort of mental decision; buttoned up his coat rapidly; called for his hat, forced it with a blow down upon his forehead; drew in his breath; and, in a calm yet determined voice, as he hastened out of the room, exclaimed, as if in soliloquy, "I *most* put a stop to *dis* business!"

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Newark, August 29th, 1821.

My health is excellent, and already I feel the value of the horse-exercise on my spirits. My entertainment goes uncommonly well. The *Major** is as great a hit as in town; every line tells. My scene is quite as good as the Lyceum. I have never had one so complete elsewhere. At present all is propitious, and my name still up. At Stamford, a small theatre, I had part of the pit laid into

* *Major Longbow.*—A. M.

boxes. I was rather annoyed by loud talking in the stage box, which was so incessant that I was quite confused. During all the first act I put up with it. The moment the second act commenced, I heard my friend again, and paused, and then only discovered the cause. An old gentleman, a physician, very deaf, sat there with his wife, who selected what she thought most worthy, and repeated very loud to him, after me. This was at length discovered by the audience, and we all laughed together. Towards the last, I waited till he had received the communication. When the audience laughed very loud, he said, "Hey!" and then she repeated: "He says, 'Mamma, I want some Daffy's Elixir!'"—"Oh—he, ha, ha, ha! he—capital!" Then he had a second laugh, which gave me breath, but made a quarter of an hour's addition to the performance. Once, when she repeated "Sweep away your mistress," very loud, it had the effect of doubting the truth, and I addressed myself to the old gentleman:—"Upon my life it is true!" amidst shouts. It was really very droll. It seems that everybody knows and loves him, which made the circumstance the more relished.

C. MATHEWS.

It was by no means uncommon for Mr. Mathews, in the course of his performances in the country, to experience ludicrous interruptions, similar to the one just related. I remember his making me laugh very much by his description of an old gentleman with green spectacles, who came into the stage-box one night during the "At Home," in some provincial town, and remained in a standing position during the early part of the

entertainment. The evening had been rainy; and as the old gentleman entered the box he deposited his wet umbrella in the corner near the door, before he advanced to the front; but upon every occasion, when any part of the performance particularly pleased him, he went to the back of the box for the said umbrella, and bringing it forward, stamped it applaudingly upon the ground. He then carried it back and replaced it in the corner where he first left it. The repetition of this ceremony was frequent, and was only put a stop to by the box becoming too full to admit of his moving any more from his place. The effect of this whimsical proceeding (which continued at intervals nearly a whole act) upon all present need not be described. My husband was almost convulsed with laughter, in which the audience cordially joined, at each manifestation of the old gentleman's approbation, who, in his earnestness while fetching the umbrella and returning it to its place, did not seem conscious that he was a contributor to the mirth that surrounded him.

On another occasion, when Mr. Mathews had been solicited to perform his entertainment in a small town, a short distance from that in which he was staying, he was induced to comply, upon the assurance that the Assembly Rŏom would be previously taken by the resident gentry, and a certain amount insured to him for the night.

On the appointed evening, he found a neat little ball-room prepared, at the farther end of which was placed a large screen, and behind it a table and chair in the space reserved for his retirement between the acts; as there was no other mode of exit for him, without walking out through all the audience. Before the visiters were admitted, therefore, my husband was obliged to be at his post. Thus ensconced "behind the arras," he was able, in due time, to discern a very genteel audience collected; the prominent object being a lady of a "certain age," seated in a large arm-chair, which had been placed there for her especial comfort, the rest of the audience being seated on benches. This lady, Mr. Mathews was afterwards informed, was a person of great consequence in the town, and the centre of the little circle in which she moved. She was a plump, rosy-faced, joyous-looking person, and moreover distinguished by a large bespangled turban, and diamond ear-rings. She talked very loud, and was evidently elated at the "treat" she declared she was prepared to receive; upon which expectancy she chatted with much volubility to everybody in turn, and read the "bill of fare" audibly, with comments upon every part of it. At last, the silver "note of preparation" was heard; the bell tinkled; the table and lamps were brought forward; the piano and musicians in their places; the overture began; and

all were seated and silent until Mr. Mathews appeared. The lady-patroness (as she clearly was) of the night then led the applause with great vehemence and warmth, by striking her large fan against the palm of her left hand, turning her head from side to side, and round, with expressive gestures and smiling observations to her friends. At length these flattering demonstrations of welcome subsided into smiling expectation, and the performer was allowed to commence his task. This little audience (all the room could hold, and *more,* as an Irishman might say) proved most joyous; but the raptures of the "great lady" knew no bounds. While the rest of the party were satisfied with the usual mode of testifying approbation, her surprise and delight at what she saw and heard refused to be confined to mere action; words, as well as laughter and applause, were necessary to express her measureless content, so that at the close of every point her voice was raised in audible exclamations of wonder and admiration, such as, "Excellent!—Delightful!—*Admirable!*—Charming!" Now and then she appealed to her friends with:—"Did you ever hear anything *so* good? Ha, ha, ha! Capital! How *very* fine *that* was! He's a wonderful man! greater than I could have believed. Charming! charming, indeed!" All these yerbal indications of the lady's approbation were very flattering; but my husband found some difficulty in con-

trolling the risible muscles of his face, while it was evident to him that the respect in which she was generally held by the rest of "the room" precluded any visible effects on their part. The patroness's wonder, however, was not at its climax until the *Old Scotch Lady* appeared, hooded and shawled before her. The effect of Mr. Mathews's sudden transformation seemed to exceed possibility itself; and during the "Leetle Anecdote" the lady seemed transfixed; all expression was denied her. She was absorbed, and remained totally silent for the time, her eyes distended, her lips apart, her cheeks pale, and her hands upraised,—the image of wonder turned to stone! But, when the story was over, the hood and shawl thrown back, and the performer stood again before her, *in propria persona*, she dropped her hands heavily upon her knees, fell back in her chair, took a long breath, and recovering her wonted power of utterance, cried out exultingly —"And *there* he is, a *handsome man again!*" This was too much for my husband; he was so upset, as he said, by this novel instance of feminine partiality that he was compelled to retire for a few minutes behind his screen to hide his blushes, and to give way to the irrepressible laughter into which his newly discovered *beauty* had surprised him.

At the latter end of August, Charles and myself paid a visit to Paris and Versailles, to some

friends, journeying with my friend Mrs. Charles Kemble who wished to place her daughter Fanny,* (who accompanied us,) at a French school. The following letters from my husband reached me during my stay abroad.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Doncaster, Sept. 17th, 1821.

I received both your letters by the same post, namely, the 10th and 11th, and a great treat, you may be assured, they were to me, after the noise, bustle, and confusion of a town during the races. You must know, that I am here "a pleasuring" for two or three days at the races, which are always my "breaking-up" days after my fag—witness Epsom and Ascott; and, as I by great caution, cleverness, calculation, long-headedness, cunning, and activity, insured the making of twenty-five guineas, before I came, which I have already insured in my pocket at this present writing (seven o'clock, Monday evening), I felt I could afford to send my little company to Pomfret to await my coming. I felt some consolation that before I received yours, and shortly after the writing thereof, you would have read my *amende honorable* for the unjust attack I made upon ———. It is between ourselves; and I rejoice that *you only* were privy to my injustice, whom I know from experience are the most likely of any other person to make allowance for my weakness. My gratification is complete at hearing of the kind treatment you have met with under such circumstances. God bless them, and all those who show kindness to my dear wife! I do not feel a momentary hesitation in saying, I approve

* The present Mrs. Butler.

of your plan of remaining in France until my return home, if not until I can come for you. I leave all to your prudence; and therefore act with respect to Charles and yourself remaining as you think proper. I find that I have not half room to reply to your two letters, by this post. Say all sorts of the kindest sayings to our dear friends the Rollses.

I received yesterday another cargo of about twenty dozen of the finest peaches and nectarines from home, directed: "Mr. Mathews, Esquire," informing me that "hol is well. The dogs is very fond of me. The gull is better. The other birds is well. And I returns my cinsere thenks for the munny. The fruit is the *pick* of the garden." It was the admiration of the learned and curious in fruit. At table yesterday I presented a large dish to Lord Cremorne, Colonel Rawdon, and a few other friends, with whom I dined.

I have quite travelling enough to hate it cordially. Regular duckings; journey after journey. Yesterday, from Derby here, sixteen miles; poured the whole day; never ceased for one moment. My heart would have broken had I been on wheels. The horse exercise has so banished all blues, that I even bear wet with good temper; indeed, like the eels, I am used to it. We have had in all nine dry days since I left home, and no more! I beg you will return by way of Calais, not Dieppe. As I believe the Rouen route is the Dieppe road, do not come over by that horrid long passage.

I hope very soon to hear from you, on this side the water. I am well, and still triumphant. Derby and Macclesfield 10*l.* each better than my last trip. Excellent health.

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Birmingham, Nov. 20th, 1821.

I have very little time to catch the post from hence, so as to be in time for Dover; therefore I merely write that you may not be disappointed at the freezing "No, sir," of a postmaster. Well I know how to appreciate it. I am well; never *so* well, and in such uniform cheerfulness of mind and spirits. Let that content thee.

You shall find waiting for you, on your return home, a brown paper parcel from Derby. Unpack it very tenderly, and you will find "a trifle from Derby," of their manufacture, with which I hope you will be pleased. They were very cheap; and I hope you will patronize my taste, though I always tremble.

C. MATHEWS.

It was one of Mr. Mathews's kindly habits always to bring me home a present after any lengthened absence; and I sometimes, in spite of myself, and the gratitude his intention deserved, *looked* my disapproval of the article. The strangest things were forced upon his notice, for which he paid more than their value; and if the article was one of a really desirable kind, I always found he had been shamefully cheated in the price. He had no notion of transacting the slightest bargain. The commonest purchase puzzled him, and he would come home after any attempt to supply himself with a pair of gloves, shoes, hat, or other trifling article, and convulse me with laughter by his serious account of the difficulties he had gone

through in obtaining what he had bought; and the bad quality and fit of his purchase was equally laughable. He gave the drollest description of the tradesmen, who always accused him of being different in his proportions from other people — nothing would fit him that was made upon general principles; neither hat, shoe, glove, neckcloth, nor stock, "nothing did for him that was suited to other men of similar height." This was, in fact, true; for if the collar of a shirt fitted, for instance, the wrists were wrong, and *vice versâ*. His hands and feet were so small that neither stockings, shoes, nor gloves could be obtained ready-made but what were too large for them. "Sir," a shoemaker would say, as if reproaching him, "you are not made like *other* gentlemen; your feet are too short for your height." This would excuse a pair of boots brought home two or three inches too long, although he had been measured for them. "Sir," said the haberdasher, "your throat is *larger* than that of *other* gentlemen." If he asked for a hat, the hatter would shake his head—"*No, sir*, your head is *smaller* than any ready-made hat: you must be *measured*." All this used to fret him for the moment; and he once asked a friend, if he thought his hatter knew him; for he wished to *try* to obtain a hat of somebody who would not twit him with his "peculiar make." His friend encouraged him to drive to a hatter's in Bond Street. I waited for him at

the door, and watched the process of putting on and taking off a great many hats. At last he hastily re-entered the carriage, and ordered it to drive home, observing to me impatiently, with a half-sigh: "Ah! it 's of no use; I was found out. No hat to fit *my* head! Hatter very much offended at my *expecting* such a thing. In fact, it appears, that I am very much to blame. They're all *angry* with me when I go to buy anything; and I feel as if I ought to apologise for my mal-proportions."

Another peculiarity of Mr. Mathews was, that he did not know how to behave to people who stood upon the debatable ground of respectable claims, neither high nor low. He always felt awkward in the presence of a tradesman of this grade. He could not bear such a person to *stand* before him, and was equally at a loss how to give his orders (which he never did with precision, or in a manner to be perfectly understood). In fact, what such persons might be expected to feel with their superiors, he felt with them. One day, in London, a tailor's journeyman came to him respecting a coat sent home that did not please. He had come inopportunely; the cab was waiting to take my husband out, and yet his good-nature made him reluctant to send the man away without his orders. He had endeavoured to direct the alteration required; but between an appointment on business out of doors and that forced upon him within, he could not

collect his ideas so as to make them suddenly intelligible to the tailor. I entered the room at the very crisis of his embarrassment, and found him in the act of abusing street-music. He said the organ playing precluded his knowing what he said; and I, observing two intervening doors open (those of the room and centre passage), closed them carefully, expressing my surprise that he had not resorted to so obvious a mode of subduing the nuisance. I saw I had made a mistake, and afterwards found that he had done a violence to his genius, and attempted to give me a hint. Alas! how could I guess that this was his plan of getting rid of the man whom he wanted courage to send away "for no exquisite reason." The man's obtuseness was equal to my own: so that, at last, my poor husband, in despair of *managing* the affair, led me out of the room, begging me to dismiss the tailor; and then bustled into his cabriolet, half angry with me, and more vexed at his own infirmity. Excessive deference from such persons vexed and disconcerted him. *Eyes* exasperated him, even from the fairest faces; for he did not like, as I have before observed, to be *looked* at.

Another oddity: — Mr. Mathews's memorandums were always made with the palest pencil-marks, on the corners of letters, and were generally carried, unprotected from rubbing, in his pocket. At one time he often complained to me that "*Mistress Tidy*" (the housemaid) displaced his me-

morandums in his dressing-room; and from time to time enumerated the woful effects such officious neatness had drawn upon him. To prevent a recurrence of this evil, I gave general orders that no paper, book, or letter should ever be touched or removed while arranging the room, unless I was called to superintend. Notwithstanding this precaution, and my reiterated warnings, one night my husband returned home, after performing at the theatre, very cross at a distress he had suffered there from the want of something he ought to have taken with him from home; for which he was compelled to use a substitute quite unfit for his purpose, "and all because Mrs. Tidy *would* remove his memorandums." (He hated to be *helped* in anything, and always himself looked out what he required from home for his performances.) I really was very angry myself at the circumstance, and summoned the responsible person to hear the charge preferred against her. "Mrs. Tidy," with tearful earnestness, protested that nothing of the sort had happened on the present occasion. Her master vehemently persisted in his charge; and the woman, turning to me, exclaimed, "Indeed, ma'am, I moved nothing but a stocking, which master had taken off with his boots, and which was lying in the middle of the room."—"That 's *it!* that 's *it!*" cried her methodical and discomfited master, "I put it there on purpose to remind me to take a *pair* to the theatre. It was my *memorandum!*"

In fact, his favourite mode of making a memorandum was that of dropping a pocket-handkerchief, a glove, or something equally conspicuous and unusual, in some part of the room in which he happened to be.*

On my return to England I found the Derby "trifles" (two biscuit figures), and the following letter, waiting at home for me.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Birmingham, Nov. 9th, 1821.

Welcome home, my love, say I, most sincerely. Notwithstanding your delight at "foreign parts," I feel very comfortable at addressing you once more at home.

Captain Saunders, now the mayor of Stratford, comes over here to-day, to hear me report progress about the Shakspeare monument. The communication from Mr. Watson will set his heart dancing and the Stratford people raving mad.

Pray write a few lines, directed to Mr. Watson, at Carlton House, and say you have just returned from Paris, and found his letter, and that I shall not be home till Christmas; but that you will communicate the contents of it to me, and that you are sure I shall get drunk with joy. CHARLES MATHEWS.†

* During the early part of his last illness, his visiters perceiving his handkerchief lying at his feet, would kindly pick it up and present it to him, to his very great vexation when this natural result recurred, which it did several times a-day, unless I had the means of warning his visiters not to notice anything of the kind.

† The letter alluded to has been given in a previous page.—A. M.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Shrewsbury, Dec. 13th, 1821.

Your cheering letter was delivered to me this morning, and came most opportunely, having been called up in the *middle of the night* *, to encounter forty miles' ride through fog and Scotch mist. I could hardly see my breakfast; and, though they can never possibly have a ray of sun in the Albion, yet they are conceited enough to have window blinds—one of which, from the pulleys being broken, hung quite down and obscured the small portion of daylight that appeared. The news of your improvement in health dispelled the clouds both from my mind and the horizon; for I had only three miles of wet, and the rest of the day has been beautiful. If we poor hypochondriacs do suffer more than you even-tempered people, we have an advantage "when stocks are up," for I am sure you never enjoy the rapture we feel at the cheering influence of the sun. The day you mention—Tuesday—I really revelled in it. I took five hours to perform twenty miles, from Warrington to Chester, and chirped like a bird as I strolled through a most luxuriant country, pitying the poor calm ones who are perpetually saying, "This must be a sweet ride in summer." I would not have arrived in gloomy old Chester for the world before dusk. I received both your letters there. I "operate" here to-morrow night. On Saturday I proceed to Hereford, where I have arranged for two nights; and on Thursday I shall burn my books, or tie squibs to Billy Crisp's tail, or jalap my musician, or commit some such extravagance as a boy would do who is going home for the holidays—as I count every hour now as such

* His exaggerated term for being forced to rise earlier than his usual time.—A. M.

urchins do about the middle of December. Oh, what fun it will be, Ma! to see you again, and my playfellow Charley — and *all the rest on you.* I will write from Hereford, and tell you as nearly as I can what time to expect me. I shall coach it up, as I cannot afford to ride 140 miles in three days; and Moses and Spoony the younger (my *musicianer*) will come up with the horses and my *fish-caravan.*—"Loaded wi' fish, I reckon," has been often repeated, in addition to "wild bastes, I do suppose," and "a gentleman's hearse, may be?" *

Poor Mrs. —— is here, with her crowd of hungry children about her. She desires all sorts of kind sayings to you, and blesses you for your letter almost as much as she does me — which is overwhelming. But it is a great reward for three hours' use of my lungs to see them exercising their little jaws to-night, which would have been rusty but for my ability as well as inclination to serve them.

Tell Charles how happy your accounts of him make me; and be assured you both possess the sincere love of

Yours affectionately,

CHARLES MATHEWS.

* This carriage was a sort of *forgon* (covered), with a curricle seat in front for his men of business. This machine conveyed his dresses, machinery, &c. on journeys.—A. M.

CHAPTER XI.

The Original of *Major Longbow*.—Letter from Colonel Thornton on the Subject of his own *Death*.—Letters to Mrs. Mathews: a Road Anecdote; Arrival at Edinburgh; Hoax there; Conversation with Sir Walter Scott; Visit to the great Novelist. — Mr. Mathews "At Home" for the Fifth Season at the English Opera House.—"The Youthful Days of Mr. Mathews."— Remarks on the Performance. — Letters to Mr. Mathews from Mr. Knight and Mr. Theodore Hook. — Private Theatricals. — Performances of Mr. C. J. Mathews. — Mr. Mathews's Advice to his Son. — Success of the latter as an Amateur Performer.

A REPORT being circulated that the original of "Major Longbow" on my husband's stage, had quitted the stage of life, that gentleman, in his characteristic style, printed a contradiction, which not only satisfied his friends that he was still alive, but at the same time that he "never *was* dead," and was anxious to justify the general assertion, namely, that he never *could* die while my husband lived.

THORNTON REDIVIVUS.

Those persons who are favoured with Colonel Thornton's acquaintance will be pleased and amused by the fol-

lowing letter from him on the subject of his *death*. Those who do not know him will be able to appreciate the exquisitely fine imitation of the Colonel's style and manner which Mathews gave the town last year in his happily-conceived character of Major Longbow.

Paris, Rue de la Paix, Dec. 25, 1821.

My honest Brother Sportsmen,

This is Christmas day, dedicated by me from my youth to gaiety and reasonable hospitality, endeavouring to make all happy, according to the situation in which Providence has placed me. In health no man can be more hearty, but not quite stout in my knees and feet. *Stomach invincible. Always an appetite. Eat three times a day:* tea, muffins, and grated hung beef at nine; at two, roasted game or cockscombs, and about a pint of the finest white Burgundy; dinner at five, and then a bottle of wine, about three or four glasses of spirits and water, rather weak—then to bed. *Sleep better than I ever did in my life. Pretty well, you will say, for a dead man.* Rise at eight, breakfast at nine, so we go on. *Every night the finest dreams.* I expect some *Wild Boar.* If it comes, our friend B. may be sure of a part.

P. S. Dec. 26. I find, by the papers, that I died, after a short illness, much lamented, &c. at Paris. However that may be, I gave a dinner yesterday to a dozen sportsmen. We had roast beef, plum pudding, Yorkshire goose-pie, *and sat up singing most gaily till two o'clock this morning.* At twelve we had two broiled fowls, gizzards, &c. and finished a bottle of old rum, in punch. *No intoxication,* for I went to bed well, and *never rose better.*

(Signed) THORNTON, Marquis de Pont.

"Can't hurt me—there's muscle—feel my arm—hard as

iron—I can't fall if I would—'pon my soul it's true—what will you lay it's a lie?"

Vide MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Doncaster, Jan. 26, 1822.

Here I am safe and sound: arrived much sooner than I expected, the North mail having increased in speed four hours between York and London since I was here last. We arrived at three o'clock, without appearing to travel remarkably quick. I had three fellow-travellers, bags, and brothers,—very gentlemanly, and very great and excellent sleepers (great qualifications to me for agreeable companions), perfectly disposed to indulge me in my taciturnity.

One "little anecdote" only can I relate: it is amusing from its perfect novelty. At Huntingdon, at three in the morning, while they were changing horses, I heard the coachman say, "Why there be but three horses?"—"Dang it, there was four, I'll be on oath, when I brought 'em out," said the horsekeeper. "Well look, then; be there four now? Come, be alive, and get t'other." He *looked* up the yard and in the stable, but in vain. The coachman swore, the guard raved; each ran up and down the town—the search was fruitless. The ostler had also started in search. At length one of the already jaded animals, who had performed his night's work, was doomed to take the place of the runaway. Just at the period when he was unwillingly dragged once more to the pole, the ostler was heard galloping back cunning Isaac, who had tried to shirk his duty. He had crawled off quietly and unperceived; then, from the distance, must have trotted, and had literally hidden himself under a gateway where he was not accustomed to go. "D—'d if ever I knew a Christian do a more cunning trick," said Dan.

CHARLES MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Edinburgh, Feb. 5th, 1822.

I arrived here on Sunday, and dined with that pleasant fellow Magrath.

I open here to-night. We have had four changes of weather since I arrived. I think things look well here—though great doubts are abroad if I am the real Simon Pure. The first night will probably suffer. I have got a horrid place to act in, across a ride: it is a circus. I shall coalesce with Murray, if he is willing. However, any way I feel up; for even a bad trip here will be no failure of the expedition. Glasgow has secured a profitable one, and something well worth my trouble and journey.

C. MATHEWS.

The "*doubts*" mentioned in this letter originated in the previous visit of his namesake, whose failure the following paragraph, forwarded to my husband at the time, will relate. It was Mr. Mathews's first "At Home," in Edinburgh.

HOAX AT EDINBURGH.

The great celebrity of the comic Mathews, of the English Opera House, last week induced an impostor to take a room in Edinburgh, and to issue bills, "Mathews at Home." Having attracted a select party to witness his "Budget of Budgets," he commenced the exhibition of his *wonderful* powers, which were deemed so intolerable as to excite the greatest dissatisfaction in the gulled spectators. A row ensued, and he was followed by a crowd of his patrons to the police-office, where he remained for protection during the night (*quite* "at home"), and next morning was brought before a magistrate. He was dismissed, there being no charge against him.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Edinburgh, Feb. 9th, 1822.

I know too many people here to study undisturbed; therefore am obliged to hide myself in the private walks, when the weather will permit. Yesterday was lovely, and I had a good spell; to-day boisterous and wet. Terry declared that he was blown off the pavement into the middle of the street, from the violence of a squall, and must have fallen, if he had not made a snatch at a man who returned his hug, like two people on the ice. I have had two nights, the first 80*l.*, for they would not be persuaded that I was myself, in consequence of the disturbance Irish Mathews occasioned here. But believing from ocular demonstration that I *was* I, my second amounted to 132*l.* which, to appreciate, you must be acquainted with circumstances too tedious, &c.* When I tell you that the boxes will only hold 55*l.* you may suppose what it was. Sir Walter, the magician of the North, and all his family, were there. They huzzaed when he came in, and I *never* played with such spirit, I was *so* proud of his presence. Coming out, I saw him in the lobby, and very quietly shook his hand—"How d'ye do, Sir Walter?"—"Oh, hoo *are* ye? wall, hoo have you been entertained?" (I perceived he did not know me.) —"Why, Sir, I don't think quite so well as the rest of the people."—"Why not? I have been *just* delighted. It's quite wonderfool hoo the deevil he gets through it all."—(Whispering in his ear) "I am surprised too; but I did it all myself." Lockhart, Lady Scott, and the children quickly perceived the equivoque, and laughed aloud, which drew all eyes upon me: an invitation for to-morrow followed, which I accepted joyfully. I doubt if the players in Shakspeare's time appreciated his invite, as I do an

* The theatre open at the same time.

attention from the man who in my mind is second only to him.

Murray has overreached himself — and I continue to oppose. Much I thank him for allowing me to stand alone, and to oppose without compunction.

CHARLES MATHEWS.

It was his invariable system to try to make arrangements with the managers of provincial theatres who had companies acting at the time, being willing for their sakes to forego the greater advantage of performing solely on his own account. But if the heads of the theatres tried to make hard bargains with him, or were illiberal in their aims, he felt that he owed it to his own great exertions to seek a mode of fair remuneration; and where he was expected to use his attraction and lungs for little more than a *moderate salary*, he felt, as he says, that he might set up for himself "without compunction." Without some provocation of this sort he never opposed a company. Mr. Murray doubtless felt his mistake on this occasion; but it never lessened their mutual good understanding.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Edinburgh, Feb. 12th, 1822.

How silly of G—— to mention such a phrase to you as "tic-doloreux," even if he had believed you had such a disorder. It was perfect childishness to mention it.

Your letter has made me very wretched. I have long felt conviction that you cannot exist in that cottage, and

every month confirms it. I never quit it but a regular bulletin is issued, of cold and rheumatism. What a martyr you have been to it! I hope you will write every day between the despatch of the last and Thursday, or send me an account.

I am going on capitally; and have the pleasure to say, without particularising receipts, for which I have not time, that, including *all* the expenses from Liverpool, of Crisp, George, and luggage, and all here, I shall clear 500*l.* by my trip. When we recollect, that I had written to give up the expedition, this is no bad affair.

I had a most delightful day at Sir Walter Scott's on Sunday. Terry and wife were there, who desire all kind sayings to you. Watty is quite concerned for your illness. He is coming up to Richardson's school in the Spring; and, as his mother will not be with him, I have made all their eyes glisten, by asking him to see you at Midsummer. C. MATHEWS.

In March, 1822, Mr. Mathews reappeared at the English Opera House, for the fifth season of his "At Home," in a new entertainment.

MR. MATHEWS AT HOME

at the Theatre Royal, English Opera House, Strand, on Mondays, Thursdays, and Saturdays, during March, 1822, with his annual lecture on *Character, Manners,* and *Peculiarities,* under the title of

THE YOUTHFUL DAYS OF MR. MATHEWS.

PART I.—From *nothing* to the age of *an hour and a quarter.* —"First the infant," &c.—Parentage.—Childhood.—From *One* to *Ten.*—"Then the schoolboy with shining morning face."—Preparatory Seminary.—Merchant Tailors' School.—Public Speeches.—Latin, Greek, and English Orations.—Dramatic Mania of Master Charles Mathews.—Parental Objections.

Song—*Trade Choosing.*

From *Ten* to *Fifteen.*—Bound Apprentice, WILKES, Chamberlain of London.—First attempt as an Actor *in Public.*—Fencing.—Interview with MACKLIN; the Veteran's opinion of the qualifications of a Tragedian.—Elopement from Home.—Fat Traveller.—Ap Llywelyn ap Llwyd, Esq.—Mineral Waters.—Stratford upon Avon.—Shakspeare's Tomb.

Song—*Market Day.*

Engaged for the Dublin Theatre.—Careful Carter.—Ingenious Porter.—First Appearance in Ireland.—Splendid Wardrobe.—Mr. Mathews ruffled.—Old HURST.—Cox's Bull.—DICKY SUETT'S Letter of Recommendation.—Hibernian Friends, &c. &c. &c.

Song—*An Irish Rubber at Whist.*

PART II.—Dublin Company.—George Augustus Fipley, of the Line of Beauty.—Mr. Trombone.—O'Flanagan.—GEORGE FREDERICK COOKE.—*Port* Arms.

Song—*Volunteer Field-day and Sham Fight.*

Mr. CURRAN (*a portrait*).

Real Irish Ballad—*Crooskeen Lawn.*

Leave Dublin.—Visit Wales.—Mr. Mathews engaged for the York Circuit.—Interview with Tate Wilkinson, Esq., the wandering Patentee.—Buckle-brushing (Garrick's buckles).

Mr. Mathews's Mr. Wilkinson's Mr. Garrick's *Richard.*

Tate's Antipathies:—Rats; Cross Letters.—York *Roscius.*—Overture from London.—Mr. Mark Magnum.—"All that sort of thing," and "Every thing in the world."—Arrival in the Metropolis.

Song—*London Green Rooms.*

PART III.—Stories: in which Mr. Mathews will take *steps* to introduce the following characters:—

Nat, Servant of All-work in a Lodging-House.

Sir Shiverum Screwnerve, Guardian to Amelrosa—(*second floor.*)

Monsieur Zephyr, French Ballet Master—(*first floor*).

George Augustus Fipley, " A Line of Beauty,"—in love.
Ap Llywelyn ap Llwyd, Esq. *Not* Thin Enough.
Mr. Mark Magnum, *non compos* Lodger (*next door*).
Miss Amelrosa, in love with *Fipley*.

The songs will be accompanied on the piano-forte by Mr. E. Knight, who will play favourite rondos between the parts.

Of this Entertainment I will here introduce the following account, written at the time.

The character of Mr. Mathews's imitative powers is now so well established, that we are spared all recourse to general analysis. The personation of Mathews is doubtless of the very highest order, for it individualises classes of character, and so far is Shaksperian. His capacity exhibits an extent of observance far beyond that of the common mimic, who can seldom compound, but must have all his originals in positive existence. As the major includes the minor, Mathews, of course, can imitate the existing individual, as well as personate the individual of a tribe; but his felicity and luxuriance are indisputably in the superior line. We always like his creations or compositions better than his mere copies; and, judging by appearances, we are of opinion, that his audience generally agrees with us.

" The Youthful Days" profess to be a sketch of a portion of incident which befell Mr. Mathews when he stole from behind the counter, and sought the smell of the theatrical lamp,—no gas in those days. The *known* characters introduced, are no doubt very closely imitated; indeed, of some of them we could judge; as, for instance, *Macklin* and *Cooke;* and we have equal confidence in the version of *Tate Wilkinson*. The greater part of the other characters, we presume, are created, not altogether *ex*

Aug.^ts Hervieu del.^t Sir Shiverum Screwnerve. Monsieur Zephyr. Nat.

Mr MATHEWS

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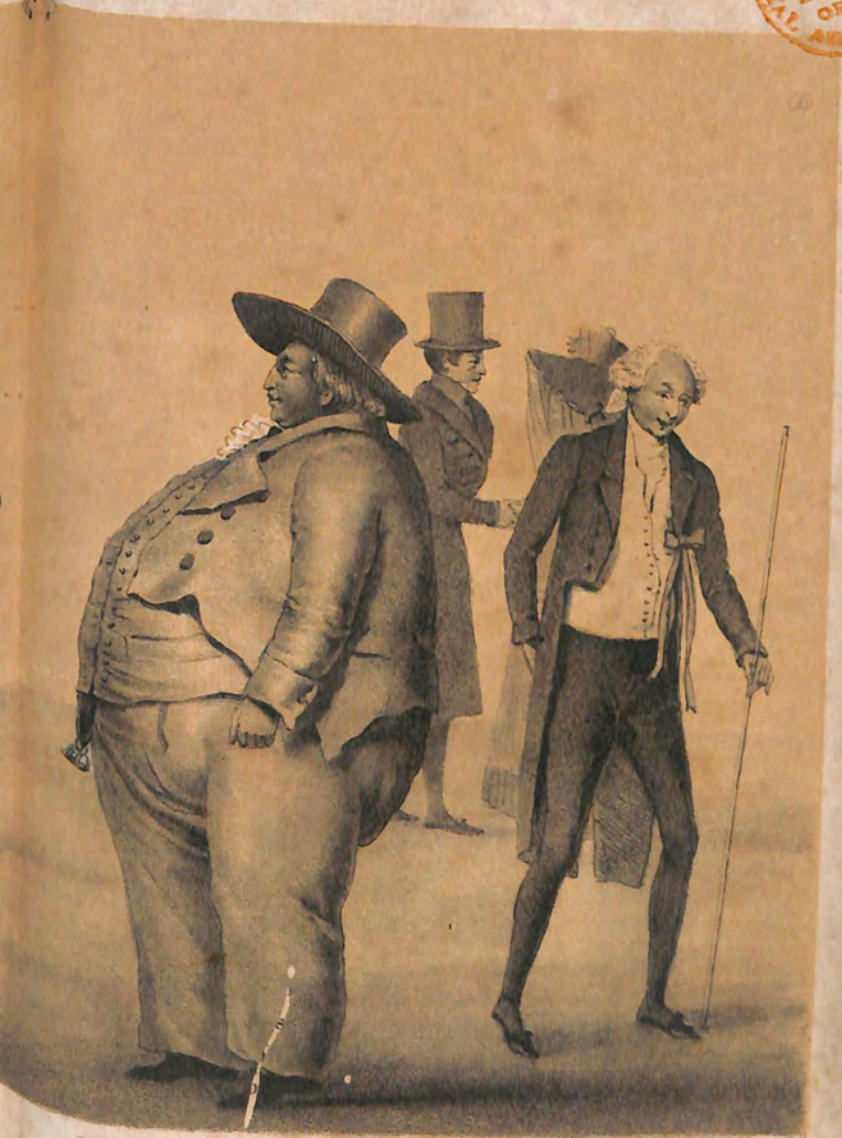

Llewelyn ab Llwyd. Ripley & Ametrosa. Mr. Mark Magnum.

nihilo, probably, but formed freely and plastically from a few predominant features. *Mr. Ap Llwyd*, a good-humoured Welshman, who washes his inside at all sorts of spas and mineral springs, in order to grow thinner, appears to be of this description, and is a very meritorious concoction. A *French Dancing Master*, dressed up for a ballet, is another most happy imitation, and, burlesqued as it is into extravagance, still preserves an admirable portion of nature and verisimilitude.

Of the recitations, the "Irish Rubber at Whist" was possibly the richest. The "Volunteer Field-day" was too well understood in this our shire of Cockney not to be well taken, although the *quiz* was in the very extent of licence. The "London Green-room," which, of course, afforded a scope for imitating a few defunct and retired, and several of the more elderly existing performers, was pleasantly and rapidly executed, without giving us too much of the respective "Garricks at second hand," which practice has often been as disagreeable to us as to Churchill. The last act concludes, as usual, with a personation chiefly of the characters previously introduced in the narrative. In the present instance, the plan is borrowed from the French piece entitled "Les Trois Etages," three stories, being, in fact, the three stories of a boarding-house, constructed upon the principle of outside galleries to each, in the manner of the Belle Sauvage, and some other of our inns. The locality, of course, supplies fine opportunities for exits and entrances, as also for lodging the various *dramatis personæ*. We do not think it so good as "The Polly Packet;" but everything cannot be best; and it is exceedingly good. The *Dancing Master*, *Welshman*, and intoxicated *Steward* at a public dinner, will bear any comparison.

The — what shall we call it, "Conversational Web," in which all the representation is interwoven, abounds, we think, in somewhat more than the usual portion of fun and whimsicality; and, what is more, Mr. Mathews seemed to deliver it in excellent spirits. He uncorked with all the vivacity of the most sparkling champagne, and the effect produced was similar — brisk, light, and transient. On the part of the spectator, the smile was constant, or the loud laugh its sole interruption; and all passed off with apparent glee on both sides.

Upon common-place imitation we place little value; but Mathews has a talent *per se;* and he who year after year can entertain crowded houses for months at a time by his own unassisted powers, is anything but a common man; and no common man is Mr. Mathews.

In his "Youthful Days" Mr. Mathews has presented us with a superiority, in point of interest, over all his former efforts. Hitherto we have been amused with the eccentricities of imaginary beings, the mere ideal creations of a lively fancy; but here our pleasure is augmented by the reflection that a great portion, at least, of his narrative is matter of fact; that we are listening to the description of actual experience, and that the individual to whom the events occurred stands before us. This is not the only reason why our attention is powerfully arrested. Characters, of whom the aged must have a distinct remembrance, and whom the young have been taught to regard with wonder, admiration, or respect, are brought before us with such marks of identity, that, while the experience of some bears testimony to the fidelity of the portraits, to others they too nearly resemble what their imagination had conceived for their resemblance or correctness to be doubted

for a moment. The *physiognomical* portrait of Wilkes was not merely admirable — it was wonderful. The very features of the sturdy patriot were presented to the eye so faithfully, that no one who has ever seen even a graphic resemblance of the original, could fail to recognise it. Let any person who possesses an engraving of this extraordinary man, take it to the theatre and make the comparison. The drop of the lip, the cast of the eye, and general aspect of the countenance, impressed us with the idea of reanimation rather than mimicry. On his voice and delivery our experience will not permit us to decide, but it possessed too much the air of reality to leave much doubt of its being genuine.

The imitation of Macklin has the same marks of fidelity. The iron-featured caustic veteran, his hard-favoured physiognomy, his growl, the lack-lustre aspect of his visual orbs, as if glazed over by the touch of time, and the general uncouthness of his manners, so true to the traditional description of him, were finely preserved. Old Hurst, with his blindness and cross-medleys; Dicky Suett, of whom our memory has preserved a recollection so strong as to enable us to pronounce the imitation admirable, and Tate Wilkinson, were exquisite portraitures. The very finest effort of Mr. Mathews's art, however, the very acme of his powers, was displayed in his delineation of the celebrated Phillpot Curran. He stood before us, not as an imitation, not as a copy, but as the original itself. It possessed a vitality in which every shadow of mimicry was lost; it was not Mr. Mathews, but Curran. A friend who accompanied us, and who had been on terms of intimacy with this great man, was strongly affected by the resemblance; and it is the most honourable testimony to the skill of the performer, that without losing a single

portion of Curran's peculiarities, but retaining the Irish accent, and the peculiar gesture of the bar, which can scarcely be considered graceful, he delivered a speech, so impressive, energetic, and affecting, so true to nature and feeling, so remote from anything resembling imitation, that the audience were moved almost to tears. It is the very triumph of art to imitate a character without making it appear ridiculous, and this triumph Mr. Mathews successfully achieved.

The faculties of Mr. Mathews are certainly improved by use. His imitations of individuals, extraordinary as they are, hide their heads before his description of a mixed conversation. Instead of playing a concerto upon a single instrument, he gives us the accompaniment and variety of a full orchestra; and he glides (in the "Irish Rubber at Whist") from one corner to another, changing sometimes the subject and sometimes the interlocutor, with a rapidity and absence of effort, which must be seen to be believed. He puts, as it were, the whole party before you at a glance. Shut your eyes, and you will become actually one of the company. Imagine the cards, and the wine, or cut the one, and cut out at the other, and your acquaintance, "as large as life," are located about you. Nothing can exceed his reception, as host, of the different visiters, whose names are announced: — the *Captain*, who talks French because he does not understand it; the *Lady* who is so anxious about *Mrs. O'Shane's* accouchment; *Counsellor O'Shane*, who has not yet heard whether he is an uncle or an aunt; and the *Tipperary Gentleman*, who writes "gout" because he forgot how to spell "rheumatism." We could go to the antipodes, to enjoy ten minutes of that description. Of no whit

less value are some of Mathews's reminiscences of actual character. Old Hurst, playing *Sir Anthony Absolute*, and forgetting the text! His ringing the bell backward, without regard to connection, upon *Sir Anthony's* threat of an ugly wife to his son: — "She shall have a hump on each shoulder, and be as crooked as the crescent; her one eye shall roll like the bull's in Cox's Museum. She shall have a skin like a mummy, and a beard like a Jew," &c. Hurst's keeping up the passion, and throwing in the words at random, as he caught them indistinctly from the prompter: — "An eye, a hump — a hump in her eye; two humps; — a bull; Cox's bull; — a beard; — a bull's beard; — cocks; a cock and bull!" To convey the effect by words is impossible; but the story, which, independent of the acting, is happily enough arranged, convulsed the house with laughter.

The more we see of this extraordinary man the more we are surprised; not at the mechanical rapidity of his transformations, not at the minute correctness of his imitations, not at the spirit and animation of his performances, for with those we, as well as all England, are familiar; but at the powers of the mind which can, each succeeding year (when one really thinks the mine exhausted) produce a fresh supply of matter and manner; and in an entertainment inevitably upon the same principle *always*, so completely vary the detail as to excite anew all the anxiety to see and hear, and to gratify that anxiety entirely in the exhibition. His introduction and imitation of several celebrated persons are highly interesting as matters of history; and notices of a life so actively spent as that of Mr. Mathews's has been, and so shrewdly observed upon, cannot fail to excite public attention, and receive public applause.

In the dramatic afterpiece of "Stories," his changes are incalculably rapid; and the difficulty of managing that rapidity, we should suppose, must be considerably increased by the inevitable running up and down stairs in the progress of representation.

I have already explained my motives in inserting friendly letters from his professional brethren. They stand at once as honourable evidences of their liberal feelings, and of my husband's just claims to their admiration, both as a private and public character. The following letter is written by his old friend "Little Knight."

TO C. MATHEWS, ESQ.

Garden Cottage, March 24th, 1822.

My dear Friend Mathews,

I thank you for the great pleasure your unrivalled talents afforded me last evening. It has frequently been said, that professional congratulations are often somewhat ambiguous; I do not pretend to decide on the justice of this remark with regard to others, but for myself, I do but feebly transcribe my delight, when I declare that, in my life I never enjoyed a dramatic treat with more unmixed satisfaction than that which I experienced in three short, exceedingly short hours at the English Opera House, where my old friend sparkled with infinite jest and flashes of merriment; — a modern Yorick, setting the table in a roar.

I am, dear Charles, your true friend and admirer,

E. Knight.

TO C. MATHEWS, ESQ.

My dear Mat., Kentish Town, 1822.

I have been laid up, and confined to my bed and room for nearly three weeks with a bilious attack, which has pulled me down, and made me like unto a shadow. Owing to my hurried circumstances, I have been very little here of late, and next week propose quitting it altogether. I was very sorry at not being able to go to Charles's private theatricals, but I got the tickets in the middle of my illness. Will you tell him so, and thank him for recollecting me.

I should like very much to go to you, and dine some day quietly, if you would let me; for I think the sight of you and Mrs. Mathews would do me good. I enclose you a bit which I took out of a magazine for the year 1760 — the date is with it — about Boruwlaski, which makes him older, I think, than we calculated. What a wonderful little creature it is! I thought if you had not got it, it would be satisfactory.*

I hear that you are doing wonders this year; and I am not surprised; for I think the subject is particularly good, when the hero of such adventures is himself present. As you are a good fellow, I dare say you will excuse the unnatural paper upon which this is written: I have no other in the house; and I was anxious to write to you to thank you for your calls, and to return my acknowledgments for Charles's kindness. Pray make my remembrances to Mrs. Mathews and her son, and believe me,

Dear Mat., yours very sincerely, T. E. Hook.

The allusion to "Charles's private theatricals" in the foregoing letter, refers to an evening's

* This account of Boruwlaski I have inserted in a previous page, where I introduced him to the reader.—A. M.

performance at the English Opera House, where our son's first attempt on the stage took place, in the French piece of "Le Comedien d'Etampes," in which he took Perlet's part, in professed imitation of that great actor, whom he had recently seen act in Paris, and had acquired a most perfect power of representing. Mr. Arnold had good-naturedly offered the use of this theatre to Charles and some young friends, for their amusement; but the entertainment turned out one of rather a superior kind to the audience. The curiosity which this evening's performance excited was extraordinary. A private play is notoriously a nuisance to be shunned, generally speaking; but here were pressing applications (nay, money, from strangers, offered) for admission; and the result was, that the theatre was not only occupied by Charles's young friends, but with much of the first rank and talent in London. The following humorous bill will explain the plan of the night's entertainment, and the handbill announces an accident which befell the hero of the evening, and which almost precluded his appearance:—

Theatre Royal, English Opera House, Strand.

Particularly private.

This present Friday, April 26th, 1822, will be presented a farce, called

MR. H——.*

* A whimsical production from the fanciful pen of "Elia," who on this occasion witnessed a successful representation of her originally condemned farce.—A. M.

(N. B. This piece was *damned* at Drury-lane Theatre.)

Mr. H——, Captain Hill. | Belvil, Mr. C. Byrne.
Landlord, Mr. Gyles. | Melesinda, Mrs. Edwin.
Betty, Mrs. Bryan.

Previous to which, a Prologue will be spoken by Mrs. Edwin.

After the farce (for the first time in this country, and now performing with immense success in Paris) a French Petite Comedie, called

LE COMEDIEN D'ETAMPES.

(N. B. This piece was never acted in London, and may very probably be damned *here.*)

Dorival (*le comedien*), M. Perlet.* (Positively for this night only, as he is engaged to play the same part at Paris to-morrow evening.)
M. Maclou de Beaubuison, Mr. J. D'Egville.
M. Dupré, M. Giubilei.†
Baptiste, Mr. W. Peake.
M. Corbin, Mr. Oscar Byrne.‡
Madeline, Madame Spittallier.

Immediately after which, A Lover's Confession, in the shape of a Song, by M. Emile || (from the Theatre de la Porte St. Martin, at Paris).

To conclude with a Pathetic Drama, in one Act, called

THE SORROWS OF WERTHER.

(N. B. This piece was damned at Covent Garden Theatre.)

Werther, Mr. C. J. Mathews.
Schmidt (*his friend*), Mr. J. D'Egville.
Albert, Mr. Gyles.
Fritz (*Werther's servant*), Mr. R. B. Peake.§
Snaps (*Albert's servant*), Mr. W. Peake.
Charlotte, Mrs. Mathews.
Brothers and Sisters of Charlotte, by six little cherubims engaged for the occasion.

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* C. J. Mathews. † The now admirable bass-singer.
‡ The present *ballet* master.
|| C. J. Mathews. § The popular dramatic author.

ORCHESTRA :—Leader of the band, Mr. Knight; Conductor, Mr. E. Knight; Piano-forte, Mr. Knight, jun.; Harpsichord, Master Knight (that was); Clavecin, by the Father of the Knights to come.

Vivat Rex !—No money returned (because none will be taken).

*** On account of the above surprising novelty not an order can possibly be admitted; but it is requested, that if such a thing finds its way into the front of the house, it will be kept.

Theatre Royal, English Opera House, Strand.

Friday, April 26th, 1822.

The ladies and gentlemen who have honoured the theatre with a visit, are most respectfully informed that Mrs. Edwin has been very suddenly and seriously indisposed. In this emergency, Mrs. J. Weippart (formerly Miss I. Stevenson), of this theatre, has kindly undertaken the part of *Melesinda*, in the farce called "Mr. H——." The Prologue, intended to have been recited by Mrs. Edwin, will be read by Mr. H—— himself; who solicits the customary indulgence.

As a conclusion to this complicated apology, it is with sorrow announced, that M. Perlet, M. Emile, and Mr. C. J. Mathews, have had the misfortune of falling from *their* horse and have sprained *their* right ankle; but it is anxiously hoped, that as the actors intend *to put their best leg forward*, the performance will not be considered a *lame* one.

Notwithstanding the effect of this disappointment and accident, the whole evening's performance went off brilliantly, while all our theatrical friends looked grave when it was over, and thought we had aided to rase all buildings from Charles's brain but that of a theatre; no such effect, however, followed, although his success was enough to upset all other ambition. His performance of the French part was really ex-

traordinary, considering the very little acting he had had opportunity of witnessing.* His father was so surprised at the result that he almost felt sorry he had given him any other profession. Charles, however, declared he would not resign that which he had chosen, and refused to fulfil the arrangement made for another night's performance, if it was to be considered in any other light by his friends than for his own amusement. It was settled, that a second performance should take place in a few nights, with a distinct set of pieces; and his father and Mr. Young (the tragedian) proposed on the occasion to appear as "green-coat men," and carry the chairs, tables, &c. on and off the stage; but something intervened to break up this laughable plot; though Charles had written a little piece for the occasion, for himself to act in, which piece reposed from that time until 1835. At that period, in the short interval between his determination and appearance on the stage professionally, no introductory piece being to be procured in such haste, the "Humpbacked Lover" was drawn forth from its obscurity, in order to present Charles in it to the town.

His father, after this amateur performance,

* Charles's early success in the French version of "Le Comedien" of 1822 suggested his adaptation of the same piece, in 1836, so successfully produced at the Olympic Theatre, under the title of "He would be an Actor."

frequently spoke to Charles upon the subject of changing his views as to his profession, and of resigning his prospective chances as an architect, for what he felt assured would produce an immediate and liberal certainty; and on Charles's return from his first year's stay in Italy, at the Palace Belvidere, with Lord and Lady Blessington, he gave such additional evidences of dramatic power as induced his father to consider his requisites very strong. His Italian Sermon, an Old Road-side Poet, his Neapolitan, Italian, and French characters, and a variety of others, he reluctantly exhibited to any but ourselves; but when, to please his father, he was prevailed upon to do so, it was the general opinion that he was eminently calculated for the stage. His various representations certainly were as original and skilful as those of his father himself, and he possessed the same extempore power of varying them. Perhaps, had he adopted his present profession at that early age, he might have followed successfully in his father's track; but he was too long allowed to contemplate the excellence which he despaired of attaining, and of which he feared to be thought a servile copier. He continued to resist every temptation to try his fortune on the stage, although he had several offers, and was more than once applied to, to become an actor at the French theatre. His love of his profession, however, remained unchangeable while he found

himself able to prosecute the study of it; nor would anything have induced him to abandon the pursuit but unforeseen circumstances, over which he had no control. By its reception of the son, the public proved how it had loved the father: this was an affecting instance of generous appreciation of its once favourite entertainer, and an acknowledgment of the respect which all felt for his memory, whose name alone was a recommendation to him who thus diffidently came before them. Never let me hear of a "forgetful," or an "ungrateful public."

After years of persuasion, of praise, and encouragement to make the trial, overruling circumstances at once determined the point, and Charles appeared upon the Olympic stage; unpractised, except by about a dozen private performances, at long intervals, in characters not even chosen by himself, and unstudied for the theatre he entered, except in the two parts prepared for his first night, when he stood before a most refined and critical audience, a fortnight after the suggestion to the completion of his attempt.

CHAPTER XII.

Mr. Mathews's Performance in Aid of a Subscription for the Irish Peasants.—Letter from Mr. J. Wilson Croker; Portrait of Mrs. Clive. — Letter from Mr. Mathews to the Rev. T. Speidell; Visit to Stratford on Avon. — Letter to Mrs. Mathews; Charles mistaken for Lord Blessington.—Letter from Mr. Terry to Mr. Mathews. — Mr. Mathews's Regret at his Compact with Mr. Arnold. — Causes of the Nervous Excitability of Mr. Mathews. — Proposed Engagement with Mr. Price in America.—Stipulations with Mr. Arnold.—Mr. Mathews's Address on taking Leave of the London Public.—Letters to Mr. Mathews from Mr. Elliston and Mr. Macready. — Letter from Mr. Horace Smith; absurd Mistranslations; Speculations on the Voyage to America. — Letter from Mr. Freeling.—Mr. Mathews's Performance at Carlton House.—Conversation with the King.—His Majesty's Anecdote of Mr. Kemble.—Royal Munificence.

Mr. Mathews gave his performance at the English Opera House on the 21st May, for the purpose of aiding the subscription for the Irish sufferers. In the course of the evening, in that portion of the entertainment where he is enlarging on Irish anecdote, he thus addressed the audience :—

"While upon the subject of Ireland, I am under the necessity of regretting that my humble endeavour in giving my entertainments in aid of the liberal subscription for the distressed peasantry of that country, should not have proved to my feeling quite successful. I wish that there had been a fuller audience than I had ever seen at my nights 'At Home.' I should have sincerely desired, that it had been the best house, instead of the worst, during the many evenings I have had the honour of making you merry here. I am convinced that the public will take the will for the deed; and it gives me some gratification, that though the numbers of the audience have unfortunately decreased, the laughter has not in proportion diminished."

The following letter was written by Mr. Croker a few days after a visit to our cottage. He was kind enough, with many others, to interest himself in my husband's hobby. Soon after this intimation, Mr. Mathews discovered, and bought the painting, by Hogarth, of Mrs. Clive, in the "Fine Lady in Lethe," now in his collection at the Garrick Club:—

TO C. MATHEWS, ESQ.

DEAR SIR, Meluny, May 22nd, 1822.

You may be glad to know that my recollection was correct, and that there is a portrait of Mrs. Clive at Strawberry Hill, by Davidson. There is also another in water-colours, of her, as "the fine lady in Lethe." Perhaps this latter is the original of your engraving. I presume that the portrait by Davidson must have been like, or

her friend, Mr. Walpole,* would hardly have preserved it. I am, dear sir, your faithful humble servant,

J. W. CROKER.

At this time Mr. Mathews paid a visit to Stratford, the object of which the following letter to his friend and schoolfellow will explain :—

TO THE REV. THOMAS SPEIDELL,
St. John's College, Oxford.

MY DEAR SPEIDELL, Stratford, April 2nd, 1822.

I slept at Oxford last night, and was much mortified to find you were not in town. I shall return about Friday. Shall you be at Oxford or at Handborough? I shall be in a hurry, but should like to shake you by the hand.

When I was here last I promised the inhabitants to build them a monument to Shakspeare, and I pledged myself to them to get the King to patronize it. I have now paid them another visit to redeem my pledge. God bless the King, I say, for he has made me very happy two or three times; and through me all the people of this place. I am here, I may say, by his command. I would say more on this interesting subject if the post-master would allow me, but he is in power, and arbitrary.

If you could find me the smallest and the handsomest Marlborough dog in the world, between this and the end of the week, I should not mind price. Charles is with me, and wishes to make mamma a present.

I am very sincerely yours,

C. MATHEWS.

* This portrait is introduced in Mr. Bentley's edition of the Letters of the Earl of Orford, from a drawing made by Harding.—A. M.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Warwick, April 3rd, 1822.

Here we are at Warwick. Charley is quite enraptured. He was up at six this morning. I got him a horse, and Saunders and I followed outside a coach. He is sketching now very busily, in which he would have been disappointed after all, but for my interest with Mrs. Hume, through the Scott visit.

It was very droll to see the capping to Charles yesterday, which we did not quite understand at the moment; it appears, throughout the town he was taken for Lord Blessington.* I saw all the furniture of the best rooms in the passage at the White Lion, yesterday; and was asked this morning when I expected my Lord? for they smoked Charley at the inn. He has created a dreadful disappointment to *Brulgruddery* and *Dan*,† I can see.

C. MATHEWS.

TO C. MATHEWS, ESQ.

MY DEAR SIR, Edinburgh, April 19th, 1822.

By the smack Favourite, which sailed from Leith, I imagine yesterday, I sent a case directed to you at the English Opera House, London, the contents of which I beg you will do me the kindness to present to Mrs.

* Lord Blessington had settled to accompany my husband and Charles to Stratford; but unfortunately, on the day fixed for their departure, his lordship was taken ill; and Mr. Mathews having pledged himself to be upon the spot on the 2nd of April, was obliged to proceed without his noble friend.—A. M.

† The names of the landlord and waiter in the comedy of "John Bull."—A. M.

Mathews, with my respectful compliments, and best wishes that it may afford her some little gratification in times of anxious separation from the original. From all I can learn, it has given universal satisfaction to the Edinburgh amateurs; and has been spoken of in the most flattering terms by all the papers. I wish most sincerely it may please in London, where there is at this time one sent for Somerset House exhibition, provided it arrived in time for its admittance, of which I am doubtful, from the intelligence I had to-day from Leith, of my case containing the busts having been twelve days at sea.

I shall be much interested to hear Mrs. Mathews' opinion of the likeness. In the mean time, believe me to be,

Dear sir, yours very sincerely,

SAMUEL JOSEPH.

It will gratify Mr Joseph to know that this excellent bust is still amongst the most prized of my possessions.

TO C. MATHEWS, ESQ.

*Millfield Cottage, Highgate Hill.**

DEAR MAT,

I have already written this day to our friend Willy, from whom I received a letter this morning, giving me the information that he had just had a note from you, stating you had a purchaser for the picture, at a hundred guineas; and, in my reply, I had authorised him to conclude the bargain with Mr. Stephenson, who has certainly

* Afterwards called Ivy Cottage; Kentish Town.—A. M.

got a very fine picture at by no means an unreasonable price. Nasmith feels himself greatly indebted for your most friendly and active attention to his interest, and begs me to express his warm acknowledgments thereupon. You and Willy Thompson, therefore, will proceed to let the painting be immediately sent home to Mr. Stephenson, who will remit the money directed to the old gentleman, No. 47, York Place, Edinburgh.

I have had several accounts of your great and decided success this season. I had no previous doubt of it whatever. I thought it on perusal, as much as I read, by far the most taking of all your Entertainments; it had more reality of life about it, and abounded in pictures of character and nature, drawn with great dramatic skill. The portrait of the *Fat Welshman* is worthy to be placed alongside my *Uncle Toby*, and will be remembered as a favourite, and original, with other comic and striking worthies of British invention.

That you have not received the punch is not my fault, but that of George Montgomery, who, although one of the kindest fellows in the United Kingdom, is proverbially the most indolent and forgetful. I have, however, this morning rung a roaring peal of monition in his ears, which shall not be suffered to die away till the punch is dispatched.

Mrs. Terry, as you will have heard, has added another little female to my family stock. God help me! Nothing can be doing better than both she and the little one. I think the mother promises to be stronger on her recovery than ever I have yet known her. She sends her very affectionate regards to Mrs. Mathews, and regrets she will not see her this summer. The most beautiful weather which we are now enjoying brings Millfield Cottage often

and strongly to our remembrance. You must, cottage and *all*, be looking lovely. So the theatres wanted to diddle you! The sooner they diddle themselves the better. It is a profession not worth the keeping.

The octavo edition of the subsequent novels is not yet published, but soon will be. "Nigel" is nearly ready, and will delight you. By the bye, your name is incidentally mentioned in a most admirable introductory epistle, in a discourse between the Author of Waverley and his friend Captain Clutterbuck. The former gives a romancing account of discovering, through the means of the ghost of Mr. Warburton's servant, Betty Barnes, of play-hearing memory, the fragments of all the old dramas once in that collector's possession, and, upon the surprise of his auditor, exclaims, "'Upon my soul it 's true!' as my friend Mathews says, 'what will you lay it 's a lie?'" 'Tis from these fragments the mottoes to the chapters are supplied.

Mrs. Terry will set about your view of the castle from her father's picture, as soon as she is about again. Little Watty will return with me in June. Adieu! If there be anything I can do for you, write and instruct me.

Believe me,

Dear Mathews, very cordially and truly yours,

DANIEL TERRY.

29th April, 1822, 14, South Charlotte St., Edinburgh.

The uniform results of this season's "At Home" proved that Mr. Mathews's name was rising with each fresh occasion; yet he was not satisfied; so tender was his conscience, that he always regarded his precipitancy in the compact with Mr. Arnold as a crime against his family. It certainly

was a great mistake; and so far a culpable error, that he proceeded in the business without the knowledge of his best friends, who knew his merits too well to have estimated them at his own modest price. This mistake was, however, like every other he committed, the result of an ardent temperament, relying more upon others than himself: quick, confiding, and sudden in his resolves, sincere and liberal in his own motives, he was trusting, to a weakness, in those of others. Yet, in looking back upon the numerous instances of this generous infirmity, (which, I own with deep compunction, too much annoyed me at the time,) it is no small consolation to me, after more than two years'* constant investigation of his character and conduct, to be unable to detect in his whole life a single blot upon his integrity, or any defect, beyond what may be called a foible in his disposition. In relation to that well-known, and too much dwelt upon, "irritability" of temperament, which his death too well accounted for and excused, it may be said that, with every outward appearance of good, nay, robust health (after his twenty-fifth year, till which period he had every symptom of a consumptive habit), and with really a powerful frame, he was in a state of almost continuous bodily suffering from one cause or another, for the most part inexplicable to medical men. In

* These pages were written in the autumn of 1837.

winter his rest was painfully disturbed at night by an irritation on the skin, though without eruption, which allowed him no sleep for weeks together, during a frost; he also suffered from a mysterious disorder in his tongue, which for years equally puzzled the faculty, and which, with all their precautionary efforts, "would come when it would come." When we remember the many severe accidents which befel him, and their consequences, —that *one* in particular, which ever after kept him in a state of perpetual pain,—without enumerating any of those occasional and petty ills that "flesh is heir to," or the vast call upon his mental resources and bodily strength in his profession, the surprise at his liability to nervous excitement will cease.

But I wander from my first intention, which was, to explain the compunctious visitings which ever and anon caused him to brood over some plan for retrieving his circumstances, and for atoning to his family and himself for what he had done. America was suggested. But such a venture seemed to me nothing short of the risk of life itself, and I steadily refused my consent to his taking the voyage, as, indeed, I had done several years before, when the "winter of his discontent" at Covent Garden made him turn with eagerness to that land of hope. Fortunately for Mr. Mathews's wishes, he became, at this time, intimately acquainted with Mr. Price, the proprietor of the New York and other principal theatres in America. Mr. Price's

manner and arguments ultimately inspired me with so much confidence in the safety and success of the experiment, and gave me so complete a reliance on his candour as well as judgment, that I relaxed gradually from my first rigid refusal, especially moved as I was, by his pledging himself to accompany my husband through "flood and field" in his own country. This last consideration won me totally from my previous objections and fears, and the matter was settled so far as it could be, without the necessary consent of his bond-holder. A visit to America at this time seemed to be as favourable to Mr. Arnold's interest as to those of Mr. Mathews, for the next season's "At Home" threatened to be at a stand-still for want of a subject. It was proposed, therefore, by my husband, to Mr. Arnold, to leave his ground at the English Opera fallow for one year, and to return the next, with materials collected in America for a plentiful harvest. For Mr. Arnold's consent to this reciprocal advantage, he offered to *give him* an *additional season* when the present term of engagement should have expired! This did not strike Mr. Arnold as sufficient inducement for the risk he considered that he underwent in resigning Mr. Mathews to such an experiment, as the voyage and the climate to which he purposed to expose himself; and finally, my husband agreed to an *eighth season*, in addition to the first term, and *two thousand pounds*,

besides, *in money!* which sum was to be paid to Mr. Arnold, by several instalments, during my husband's absence. This was a fearful bargain; and I remember thinking it almost as imprudent as the former. However, my poor husband was sanguine in the extreme; and I endeavoured to be satisfied, and to "hope for the best," the usual phrase resorted to when we feel sure of the worst. In fact, I could not but consider such an exorbitant purchase of twelve months' liberty as fatal to the end proposed, namely, that of realizing a larger sum by the experiment than he could gain in London. This great responsibility considered, it appeared highly improbable that he could benefit by his toil and risk, further than in seeing a new race of human beings, from whom to glean new characters for his next "At Home;" and so it proved. My husband, by concurring events, though brilliantly successful when he *did* act, lost part of his average receipts by this voyage; and the first sum he forwarded to England was to meet the first instalment due to Mr. Arnold.

All, however, was finally resolved upon; and in June, on the last night of the season, he took leave of the London public, in the following address.

Ladies and Gentlemen—My task of the evening being finished, it now only remains for me to bid you farewell. This is the last time for many months to come, that I shall have the honour and pleasure of appearing before you. I

would fain make you merry at parting, but I feel it impossible to leave such kind friends, even for a time, without a sensation here that prohibits an attempt at a mirthful leave-taking. That I may not therefore throw the same cloud over you which at this moment overshadows me, I will merely entreat that you will not forget me in my absence, and believe that though the Atlantic must part us, it is utterly impossible that I can ever forget how deeply I am indebted to your flattering and unwearied patronage. I trust to be enabled to bring back a new budget for your amusement, and all my powers of observation shall be roused to their utmost to collect such materials in my travels as shall prove that I have not absented myself from your smiles in vain.

As soon as the fact of Mr. Mathews's approaching departure was known, he was gratified by many flattering expressions of strong interest and regard. Amongst these he received the following note from his schoolfellow and early friend, Mr. Elliston.

TO C. MATHEWS, ESQ.

MY DEAR SIR, Stratford Place, June 8th, 1822.

Do me the favour to let me have a small private box, on one of the evenings of your performance in the ensuing week. I wish to have my impression of your talents left fully on my mind before your departure; and you will bear with you to America my ardent wishes for your prosperity and safe return.

Yours, my dear Sir, very sincerely,

R. W. ELLISTON.

TO C. MATHEWS, ESQ.

My dear Mathews, Berners' Street, June 29, 1822.

The want of opportunity to assure you, with a plausible pretence for entering on so suspicious a subject (for such assurances are either very worthless or very valuable,) of my regard and respect for you has for many months pressed more heavily on my patience than I fear a sin would upon my conscience: I therefore leave you to imagine from my past anxiety with what satisfaction I seize the present occasion of expressing to you my regret that our adverse destinies should have afforded me so few opportunities of cultivating your friendship. As it will be long before we can meet again, I have less hesitation than I otherwise might have in declaring to you without the restraint of ceremony, whose language sincerity disowns, my cordial regard and esteem for your character. While I offer you in plain honesty the just tribute (if you think so humble a tribute worth acceptance), I beg you will not take into the account my admiration of your extraordinary talents, in the avowal of which my single voice could not swell one note higher the loud and general chorus of praise that attends upon you; but I request you to believe that I am proud and gratified in acknowledging the sentiments of attachment which the noble and excellent qualities of your heart and mind have excited in me; and in memorial of their truth, I beg leave to request your acceptance of the accompanying picture, which may derive, in your opinion, that value from the artist's genius which the subject is incapable of bestowing.

I am too well aware of my own tendency to prolixity to follow my own wishes by prolonging my letter, and as I prefer even the cold language of courtesy to that which

may be construed as adulatory, I will relieve you from farther tediousness, trusting your own warmth of heart with the credit due to my assertion, that your success and happiness in our own or more distant countries is equally interesting to me, and that

I am, dear Mathews, your faithful friend,

W. C. MACREADY.

A fine painting by Jackson, now in the Garrick Club, of Mr. Macready in the dying scene of Henry IV, accompanied this most gratifying and valued letter.

TO C. MATHEWS, ESQ.

DEAR MATHEWS, Brighton.

You have no occasion for your friendly fear that I must have been "first knocked *down* and then *up*, by a *bus* or a *cab*," since I neither called a second time at Ivy Cottage, nor availed myself of the box you were so kind as to reserve for us. In fact, I knew nothing of the latter friendly arrangement, as I was compelled to leave London on Friday, and did not receive your letter, which was sent after me, until yesterday. Best thanks, nevertheless, for your kind intentions; and you may well suppose that I would gladly have seen you "At Home," both theatrically and domestically, if I could. The mistranslation you mention is absurd enough; but one might easily find twenty worse cases in our highways and byways; for the common people have a strange propensity to adopt foreign words to their own familiar notions, particularly in the signs of shops and public-houses. *L'Aiguille et Fil* (the needle and thread), after being corrupted, perhaps in France, into

l'Aigle et Fils, has been faithfully imported by our haberdashers as the "*Eagle and Child.*" Every one knows the perversion of *Boulogne* mouth; and the arms of one of the city companies, suspended from an inn at Hounslow with the motto of "God encompasses us," procured for the house the name of the Goat and Compasses,—a singular conjunction, which is now actually figured on the sign-board in lieu of the original arms. I have told you (have I not?) of Mrs. Lennox's strange blunder in translating from the French an account of the siege of Namur, which is equalled, if not surpassed, by one of those hacks employed by Cave to *do into* English Du Halde's Description of China, most Hibernically fixing an important occurrence to the twenty-first day of the *new* moon, having confounded the French words *neuve* and *neuvieme.*

I should not, perhaps, intrude the opinion, but since you ask me how I like your friend ——, as a companion, I must frankly answer not over much. He is ready and fluent; but it seemed to me to be a quickness of words rather than ideas. Whatever subject was started, he appeared to think it necessary to be always eloquent; in which, as well as in some other respects, he reminded me of "that great man, Mr. Prig, the auctioneer, whose manner was so invariably fine, that he had as much to say upon a ribbon as upon a Raphael."

Your receiving the thanks and applauses of ———, for not knowing what you ought to have known touching his benefit, reminds me of an exploit of my own, when I was a boy at school, and was asked the Latin for the word cowardice. Having forgotten it, I ventured to say that the Romans had none; which was fortunately deemed a *bon-mot*, and I got praises and a laugh for not knowing my lesson.

So you really have serious thoughts of crossing the Atlantic, and picking Brother Jonathan's pocket of his dollars, after you have thrown him into fits of laughter; and you speak of the project as calmly as if you were about to fly from a country where you had been unhappy and unsuccessful, and from people who did not appreciate you as you deserve. Why, you Mammonite! what is to become of *us* in your absence? You will be making a fortune at *our* expense, not that of the Yankees; and as to any pleasure in the trip, lay not that flattering unction to your soul. The voyage, like all other voyages, must be a monotonous, objectless, occupationless, idealess nuisance; and how limited must be the pleasure of land travelling, even in the finest country in the world, where there are no human, or at least no civilized associations—nothing to connect the past with the present! What are rocks, forests, after your first stare of admiration, where there are no ruins, no local traditions, no historical records to lift them out of their materiality, by associating them with the great names and great achievements of past ages? You remember what Johnson says about the plains of Marathon and the ruins of Iona. You may get stimulants to patriotism and piety in many other places than these (of the *Old* world); but what elevating recollections can you conjure up in a new country? Johnson has given his opinion on this very subject (and I say *ditto* to the Doctor)—for when some one asked "Is not America worth seeing?" he replied, "Yes, sir; but not worth going to see!" That you will make it worth your while *financially* I don't doubt—that it will answer your expectations in any other respect, I *do* doubt; that you would do much better to remain quietly where you are, I am quite sure. My wish

may be father to the thought, but that does not invalidate it. I and mine to thee and thine. Ever yours,

HORATIO SMITH.

P.S.—I saw our witty friend Dubois in London, who told me an anecdote in which you figured. W—— (so said the wag) pressed you to act for his benefit in the after-piece at Covent-Garden, which you said you would willingly have done, but that you were engaged that night to perform in the after-piece at the English Opera-house, and could not cut yourself in half. "I don't know that," replied W——, "for I have often seen you act in *two pieces*." Is this true? or is it one of Dubois's own children?

TO C. MATHEWS, ESQ.

42, Bryanstone Square,
4th July, 1822.

MY DEAR MATHEWS,

You said, and it was kindly said, that you would dine with me before you left the country. Let me offer you Monday in the week after the next, at half-past six o'clock.

It was too delicate a subject to say much upon to Mrs. Mathews, but when you do go, she cannot find so safe and certain a medium of corresponding with you as through me; nor can you, on the other side the Atlantic, find a better mode than sending yours to her under cover to me. We shall find better time and place for the arrangement of these measures than the present.

Mr. Charles Mathews is to do me the kindness to accompany you to dinner. I beg my best compliments to your amiable wife. Believe me, dear Sir, yours always,

F. FREELING.*

* Afterwards Sir Francis Freeling.—A. M.

Previously to his going to America, Mr. Mathews was once more commanded to revisit Carlton House, and perform his "Youthful Days;" where the same attentions as before, and the same gratifying results followed, nay, the same rooms (*not* the dust and broom) were prepared for him. This performance, like the former, was also to a select party.

Between the acts, the King conversed with Mr. Mathews as on the previous occasion, and commented with great judgment upon all that he had done. He told him, however, that he thought his imitation of Curran the least successful of any he did. This at first surprised and disappointed Mr. Mathews, until he recollected and suggested to his Majesty that his imitation was given in Mr. Curran's public manner, which was widely different from him at other times. The King observed, "True; I never heard him in public. I have only known him in private life." Mr. Mathews then gave a specimen of Curran in society; at which the King was delighted, and exclaimed, "O, excellent! excellent, indeed! I am glad I objected to what you first did; for it has drawn forward the proof that your observation and powers are unerring. Your imitation is perfect—*perfect.*"

The King then talked of Mr. Kemble, and said "Your *Kemble* is excellent, whether on or off the

stage. I used to fancy my own imitation of him very true. I had a great regard for Kemble; he was my very good friend. I'll suffer no one to speak a word against Kemble." The King then remarked upon Mr. Kemble's correct pronunciation of the English language, and the natural horror he felt at any distortion of it. This led to my husband's relating a story of the tragedian's correcting a servant, one night, at Lord North's. The gentlemen staying later over their wine than usual, a footman informed Mr. Kemble that "the carriage was waiting, and that Mrs. Kemble had desired him to say *she had got the rheumatiz.*" After a minute's pause, Kemble turned to the man and, deliberately taking a pinch of snuff, said, "Tell Mrs. Kemble that I'll come: and another time, sir, do you say *tism.*" The King laughed loudly at this anecdote, and observed, "O, it is *so* like him! I can relate a story of the same kind, which will prove that he could not abstain from such corrections, whether it was a servant or a prince who offended his nice ear. One evening, after he had dined with me, perceiving, in the course of conversation, that Kemble carried his finger round his snuff-box, evidently in distress at its emptiness, I held out my own, silently inviting him to partake of its contents, when he exclaimed, 'Is it possible! Does a prince offer his box to a poor player?' I replied 'Yes; and if you will take a

pinch from it you will much *obleege* me.' Kemble paused for a moment, then bowed stiffly, and, dipping his finger and thumb into the box, replied, 'I accept your Royal Highness's offer with gratitude; but—if you can extend your royal jaws so wide, pray, another time, say *oblige*.' And I did so ever after, I assure you, Oh, I'm under vast obligations to my friend Kemble!" *

At the close of the evening, the Prince graciously took leave of my husband with much kindness of manner, and expressing a wish that his approaching voyage might prove safe and prosperous.

It is, I believe, perfectly well known that Mr. Mathews never accepted pecuniary advantage for any exercise of his talents induced by friendly solicitation in private, or as a matter of courtesy in the

* I remember another instance of the same kind. When Mr. Kemble acted in York as "a star," staying in the house of Tate Wilkinson, Mr. Mathews called there on some pretence, for the sake of being near the great actor. On entering the room, Mr. Kemble was sitting at the further end of it, seemingly absorbed in reading. Mrs. Wilkinson, a *broad Yorkshire* woman, inquired of Mr. Mathews as he entered, whether he did not find the streets bad to walk in, telling him that Mr. Kemble had been out, and had assured her they were very *slippy*. Mr. Kemble, evidently ear-wounded by the word, slightly shook his head, without any other movement, and, as if unconscious that his correction was audible, muttered, "*slippery—slippery—slippery!*"—A. M.

society of persons of rank. If he had chosen thus to *let himself out*, he might long ago have retired upon a fortune so obtained; but his gentlemanlike pride and independent spirit precluded his receiving any remuneration for his talents, except in the way of his profession. One instance of royal munificence (not to be rejected by a subject), however, has fallen in my way,—the only one that has escaped destruction from the monthly sacrifice made by my husband. This is so agreeably expressed, and so characteristic of the royal kindness from which it emanated, that I cannot resist inserting it here.

TO C. MATHEWS, ESQ.

Mr. Robt. Gray begs leave to inform Mr. Mathews that he has received the King's commands for issuing one hundred guineas from the privy purse, in token of the pleasure his Majesty has derived from Mr. Mathews's superior excellency in the line of his profession; which sum will be most readily paid by Mr. Gray upon his being favoured with Mr. Mathews's receipt for the amount.

Duchy of Cornwall, Somerset Place,
9th July, 1822.

At the back of a printed copy of the prospectus of the design for the erection of the Shakspeare

monument,* appears the following pithy communication from Mr. Bunn, the late lessee of Drury Lane Theatre, addressed to Mr. Mathews.

DEAR MAT,

Mr. Kean, on declining to become one of the committee for the laudable undertaking described at the back hereof, made the following remark to me:—"I will build him a monument myself, by acting his characters."

Yours, A. BUNN.

Birmingham, July 27th, 1822.

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* To which the following list of its supporters was added.

Patron.

His Most Gracious Majesty.

President.

His Royal Highness the Duke of York.

Vice-Presidents.

His Grace the Duke of Bedford.
His Grace the Duke of Devonshire.
His Grace the Duke of Wellington.
The Most Noble the Marquis of Lansdowne.
The Right Honourable the Earl of Aberdeen.
The Right Honourable the Earl of Dartmouth.
The Right Honourable Earl Grey.
The Right Honourable Earl Spencer.
The Right Honourable the Earl of Blessington.
The Right Honourable the Earl of Elgin.
The Right Honourable the Earl of Egremont.
The Right Honourable the Earl of Warrington.
The Right Honourable the Earl of Whitworth.
The Right Honourable the Earl of Aylesbury.

London Committee.

Right Honourable Sir Charles Long, G.C.B.
Sir George Beaumont, Bart.
Sir Walter Scott, Bart.
B. W. Proctor, Esq.*
Sir Thomas Lawrence, P.R.A.
Francis Freeling, Esq.
Washington Irving, Esq.
S. T. Coleridge, Esq.

Sub-Committee.

Mr. Charles Kemble.
Mr. Fawcett.
Mr. Macready.
Mr. Terry.
Mr. Young.
Mr. Mathews.

Stratford Committee.

Sir Grey Ringworth, Bart.
Rev. James Davenport, D.D.
Rev. John Ellis.
Captain Saunders.
William Oakes Hart, Esq.
Robert Bell Wheeler, Esq.

Treasurer, Rowland Stephenson, Esq. Banker.

General Secretary, Mr. Mathews.

Secretary for the County of Warwick, Mr. Bunn.

Secretary for the Town of Stratford, R. B. Wheeler, Esq.

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* Barry Cornwall.—A. M.

CHAPTER XIII.

Mr. Mathews's Departure for New York—His Letters relating his Adventures during his Absence from Home. — The Voyage.—Cabin Passengers. —Squally Weather. — The Yellow Fever in New York.—Arrival at Bristol, in the United States.—Excessive Heat.—Arrival in Philadelphia.—Elizabeth Town.—Independent Landlords.—A Hottentot Adonis. —An American Boniface.— Port Wine.— Rudeness of the Lower Orders of Americans.—Hospitality of the Higher Orders.—Arrival at Baltimore.—Mr. Mathews's debut on the American Stage.—His Reception.—American Audiences.— Letter from Mr. Young to Mr. Mathews: Elliston's Management.—Mr. Mathews's Letters from America Resumed.—Difference of the Time between England and America. —An American Party. — A Yankee Election.—Theatrical Success.

In August, Mr. Price accompanied us to Liverpool, whence he and my husband were to take their passage to New York. I will pass over all the hopes and fears of this parting. The travellers sailed, and Charles and I returned slowly and pensively back to town, to await with intense anxiety the first letter announcing Mr. Mathews's escape from the perils I so dreaded to think upon.

During the interim I had not been allowed to read a newspaper. The first intelligence, therefore, of my husband came from his own hand.

I shall leave to his letters (with some of the contemporary critical notices) the relation of his adventures during his absence, without interrupting them with any comment of my own, unless when absolutely required.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Hoboken, near New York, Sept. 6th, 1822.

I have the pleasure of announcing to you my safe arrival in New York harbour last night, after a most delightful passage of thirty-five days. During the whole time I was not even qualmish for one moment So far from the most distant approximation to sickness, the effect of the sea air produced only the most fierce and unconquerable craving after food. In short, hunger was my only disease. We had eleven cabin passengers,—only one female, the captain's wife; an old colonel in the Army of '69, a regular built Methodist, whether preacher or not we could not discover; five young Americans, who had been sent by their relatives to improve themselves abroad, and who had been in Paris, Italy, and England, and of course furnished ample materials for pleasant conversation; a Yorkshire cloth-dealer; and a strange compound mixture of gentleman and blackguard, whose origin, connections, and profession remained a mystery to the last, but whose constant anxiety seemed to proceed from the dread of being one moment sober, his unremitting labour to keep himself equally intoxicated, and who was never better than in a state of sober

tipsiness,—yet the most violent feeling which he excited was pity; for he was never offensive or troublesome, and submitted with the greatest good humour to the perpetual tricks we played him. The Colonel, a mixture of *Longbow* and *Prolix*, was a *butt*—the Methodist a *victim*. These, with cards, backgammon, chess, and reading, filled up our time very agreeably. The weather was delightful during the whole passage, not more than about two days' rain, and never of long duration. We had two squalls only, of about half an hour each; one accompanied by a thunder-storm and tremendous lightning, which gave me a tolerable specimen of what a gale might be; for a regular gale it was not allowed to be by those who had crossed the Atlantic before. However, it was quite sufficient to satisfy my ambition. The weather was intensely hot during the latter part of the passage, and only admitted of dressing-gowns. I enjoyed invariable health and spirits; and was never better in health in my life than I am at this moment. We were within three hundred miles of New York on the twenty-seventh day; and had the wind been fair, we might easily have accomplished the passage in two days more, which, at this time of the year, would have been accounted a quick passage. We were, however, becalmed three or four days in succession, and were eight days in performing it. So much for my voyage and safe arrival. And now, my dearest wife, I am arrived at a painful period, for I cannot conceal from you that, from the moment of my arrival in the bay, I have suffered a dreadful reverse of the cheerfulness I had hitherto enjoyed. This, however, has arisen chiefly, indeed entirely, on your account. Of course you must have heard, long before this will reach you, the news which, when first communicated to me, shocked and appalled me—that the yellow fever had made its appear-

ance in New York.* The intelligence was abruptly conveyed to us by a fisherman, who came alongside in the bay, with the most ignorant and shameful exaggerations. You may imagine my sensations—I cannot describe them; but quick as lightning I thought of the effect the account of this calamity would have upon you. If, within twenty miles of the spot, we should hear the most absurd reports of facts so easily ascertained, how naturally would they be magnified at the distance of three thousand! Then, again, the idea of your hearing it a month at least before I could have an opportunity of giving you any consolation on the subject, agitated and distressed me beyond measure. These were my first and most painful impressions. For my own part, I am now as completely satisfied that no danger exists, as I am that you are free from it at Highgate, or that the pens I am writing with are a great torment. For God's sake, my dearest wife, calm your agitation if you have not heard the truth; though even that I am sensible will make you wretched. Receive this assurance from me, that on my most sacred word of honour, the danger is past; after six weeks sickness and alarm, the Board of Health reported yesterday only two cases, both doubtful, and these in a population of one hundred and thirty thousand souls. This is the third visitation in nineteen years. The disease is confined to one part of the city, called the infected district; and no one case has occurred out of those bounds. The magistrates have caused all the inhabitants of this district to remove and shut up their houses; and fences have been erected across the streets to prevent all communication.

* This I had *not* heard, thanks to the watchful kindness of some friends, who had contrived, with the connivance of my servants, to keep every newspaper and other reports of the calamity from my knowledge.—A. M.

By this means the progress of the fever has been stopped; and though a great panic has been struck, and numbers have fled, yet I understand, from every person I have seen, that in those parts of the city which are declared healthy, business goes on as cheerfully as before, and no alarm is felt. The Board of Health publish reports daily. Price went on shore last night; I remained on board; and all but three of us followed Price's example. They came to us again this morning, and declared all danger past. However, I resolved not to enter the city until all the inhabitants are again settled and perfect health restored. I am laughed at for my fears; but I owe it to you and dear Charles to avoid all possibility of risk. This morning, therefore, I crossed the river in a steam-boat, to the most romantic and beautiful village, whence I date this, and luckily found a lodging in a detached house. I then went back to the vessel, and here George and I are snug from all alarm and danger.* We have an arm of the sea, about four miles across, between us and the most healthy part of New York, and seven from the diseased district. The theatre opened on Monday; but I rather think I shall go to Boston or Philadelphia, and defer my performance here; for every other town in the United States is free from disease. As I must despatch this to-morrow, I cannot possibly speak decisively until my next letter, which will leave this on the 16th; but be assured that no power or persuasion shall induce me to go near New York until I can go with that kind of confidence that would induce you to give me your consent. Pray be cautious to shut your ears against all reports,—mine is Gazette authority; beware of newspapers. The fisher-

* *George*, his servant.—A. M.

man reported that one hundred and forty had died in twenty-four hours, and that no one had recovered who had sickened; and he lives only twenty-five miles from the city. Here, from the bills of mortality, and the official returns of those who dare not deceive, I have ascertained, that in six weeks only eighty persons have died out of one hundred and thirteen thousand, and not fifty of them of the fever, and that numbers have recovered who had been infected. The first frosty night entirely eradicates it, which is pretty sure to occur in September, and it never makes its appearance after that month.

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Philadelphia, Sept. 12th, 1822.

I have the pleasure to inform you, that I have made an arrangement by which I avoid New York altogether until November, and thereby keep entirely clear of the remotest possibility of danger. All other parts of the United States are healthy. On Sunday last I received a summons from Price, to follow him to Bristol, seventy miles from New York. I arrived there on Monday evening, and found him at Cooper's house,* where I was made very welcome. He is away until next Saturday; but Mrs. Cooper and Mrs. Price made me very comfortable. They are both very charming women. Cooper's house is after my own heart, delightfully situated on the banks of the Delaware. If I were not a salamander I should, for once, confess that the sun could be hot enough for me. The Americans,

* Mr. Cooper the American tragedian, with whom we had had such friendly intimacy at Liverpool in 1804.—A. M.

"unto the manner born," are astonished at my bearing the climate so well. The thermometer is to-day ninety degrees, and not a puff of air. They are all panting; but I am not at all distressed, excepting in the night, and then I suffer. It is not possible to bear the least covering. The musquitoes have not yet attacked me, therefore I think I shall escape, as I do at home, with your enemies the gnats. Price came down this morning mad. He declared that two millions of musquitoes had kept him awake all night. We arrived here on Wednesday, per steamboat, twenty miles in two hours and a half. The manager of the theatre had sent an offer to me, and I therefore came over here to meet him, as the conveyance is so pleasant. A new and beautiful theatre is nearly finished here, in place of the old one destroyed by fire. I have made an engagement to play at Baltimore, under the same manager. In a few days I shall commence, but to-morrow return to Bristol, to spend a few days with Cooper previously to my journey. Baltimore is a hundred and twenty miles hence. I shall be able to announce my arrival, and further particulars, by the next packet. Hitherto I am so much in amazement lost, that I dare not trust myself to give an opinion of the people, or venture to say whether I like or dislike them. It appears to me, that the lower orders must necessarily prevent a European from being comfortable, if he has not made up his mind very resolutely to look on, laugh, and thoroughly despise. If this be the effect of a Republican form of government, give me a monarch even if he be a despot. For a specimen:— I had taken a jaunt in a steamboat with a fellow-passenger to New Brunswick; but, a wretched inn, an independent landlord, who took a chair and sat down while we were at breakfast, with his hat on, hospital beds, &c. drove us

away on Sunday morning to Elizabeth Town, fifteen miles on our road back to Hoboken. There are no post-chaises here, nor any mode of travelling but steam or stage-coaches, excepting occasionally an innkeeper happens to have a carriage. This was the case at Brunswick, and we were forwarded to Elizabeth Town. When we drove up to the door, no soul came out to greet us, though the landlord and waiter were sitting in the hall cheek by jowl, see-sawing upon chairs — a favourite mode here. We entered the house and passed them. At length we ascertained which was mine host. He shook us both by the hand, and said to each, "How d' ye do? I have seen you before?"—"Can we have beds here?"—"I guess you can." At night I was stretched on a wretched straw mattress, but was awoke at four o'clock, before day-light, by mine host, who said he had a letter for me. You may judge of my amazement, for I was confident when I went to-bed that the fellow did not know my name; however, he had *guessed*, and found me out. The letter proved to be from Price, who had sent a carriage to Brunswick for me, having heard that I was there. The driver came on in the mail to Elizabeth Town, and, on arrival, Boniface would call me up.

When I got up I agreed to go to Price, in the machine in which I came, which had rested there all night. When I was ready, the driver said to the one who had been despatched for me, "Will you go inside or out?" and the fellow, with a segar in his mouth, actually hesitated whether he should sit by my side or the driver's. In short, all the Whites of the order are born blackguards, and the Blacks, *scent* per cent. above them in being *genteel*, — a favourite word here. The driver took up a book that I had laid down on the seat, and began to read in it, without

the least symptom of apology. There is not the slightest show of civility with them; a bow or a touch of the hat I have not seen once, or heard the words "thank ye" once used upon payment. As to the higher order, for there are but two, what I can gather from a party with whom I dined yesterday is, that they differ but little from the English in either manner or customs. They are natural, easy, and polite; and you will not dislike them from hearing that they are most anxious to show me great attention. About twelve of the first people in Philadelphia gave me a splendid dinner yesterday on my arrival, though I had left my letters of introduction at New York.

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Baltimore, Sept. 28, 1822.

I arrived here on Saturday morning last, and made my debut on the American stage on Monday, Sept. 23, with the "Trip to Paris." Nothing could be more enthusiastic and cheering than my reception. I was a little embarrassed at first, as I always am, at great applause: it affected me, and with difficulty I made my exordium. The first song, you know, is not calculated for great effect; and deep attention was all my repayment for some minutes after my commencement. When I came to the ballad-singer and his pupil, "London now is out of Town," which is their own national air, I looked upon my business as done in America. They roared and screeched as if they had never heard anything comical before; and I don't think they have been glutted in that way.

I discovered the never-to-be mistaken token of pocket handkerchiefs crammed into the mouths of many of the

pittites. I had only to hold up my crooked finger when I wanted them to laugh, and they obeyed my call. I was most agreeably surprised, indeed, at finding them an audience of infinitely more intelligence and quickness than I had expected. Bartley had shrugged his shoulders at the idea of their taking the jokes. One of the London papers said I should be lost here; and most people supposed that I should find them dull; and so they are in private, I suspect — *tarnation* heavy and grave, but not so in the theatre. The neatest and best points were never better appreciated, even in London; and I am quite certain from the effects, that the French language is much more generally understood here than in England. They have a much larger proportion of French people, for the size of their towns, than we have, and every bit of broken English is a sure hit.

I repeated the "Trip to Paris" on the second night; and, last night, "The Country Cousins" went gloriously. The whole lower circle was crammed; but only those who could go in coaches could attend of course. The first night there were eight hundred dollars in the house, and my share came to 50*l.* sterling. In my next, I shall be able to tell you the results of my seven nights' engagement, which is an experimental one. The three great towns, Boston, Philadelphia, and New York, are the marts where I am to make my money. In the mean time, we will not object to 50*l.* per night; which sum Price offered me certain, and I was advised to refuse. The imperial and important fact I have ascertained, — that they can taste and feel my humour, and that I have made a great hit. The papers, which are very numerous here, and have taken me up with a high hand, will send my fame before me through the States. I was very anxious and doubtful, and looked upon the first night here

to be one of the most important in my theatrical life. It is over, and well over; and I have no doubt, from its effects, that my utmost hopes will be realized. Wood, the manager, is quite a gentleman, and him only have I yet seen. I had only one letter to Baltimore; and the person to whom it is addressed is not at home. Price I have left at Bristol; but will send your letter to him. You see I have followed your example in the size of my sheet, though I hardly hope to fill it.

I rejoice as the hours fly that you are nearer getting my first letter. The most serious part of the appalling news of the fever was the effect I feared the first report might have upon you, and the distressing suspense of perhaps three or four weeks, in which you would be kept. I hope, by the end of next week, my letter will have reached you; and from that time the communication will be more regularly kept up.

C. MATHEWS.

TO C. MATHEWS, ESQ.

DEAR MATHEWS,

I indite a few lines to you, sitting in your breakfast room, having made, or rather being now in the act of making, a morning call upon Nancy. I despair of being able to send you news; you have so many and such various acquaintances, that I suppose you are regularly supplied with intelligence on all subjects,—moral, religious, political, and theatrical. This letter, therefore, will serve for little else but to show you that I have not forgotten you in your absence, and, moreover, to fulfil the promise I made to you when we parted. From whatever source you have gleaned your theatrical news, it is a text upon which

you can bear to hear more than one person preach; and so, here I go. You have heard, or you have not heard, but in either case you shall now learn, that Elliston has abandoned the *cheap and nasty* system, and adopted the liberal one! and that the new proprietors of Covent-Garden are now trying the experiment which failed with Elliston, and, of course, is failing with them. In a word, Drury-Lane is playing to enormous houses, and Covent-Garden to empty benches. It is lamentable to witness one folly treading on the heel of another, to the destruction of so fine a property, which cost so much money to establish, and talent to uphold.

To you, however, I need not dilate on the mischievous consequences of breaking up an old established company. So, a truce to further comment, which I will leave you to make. But, for a few facts. Thus the matter stands. Drury-Lane has got Miss Stephens, Liston, Braham, Kean, Dowton, Munden, Terry, Madame Vestris, Cooper, Young, Elliston, Harley, D'Egville's *pupils*, Mr. and Mrs. Noble, late Lupino, Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Byrne. Covent-Garden parted with Liston, Stephens, and Young, to save 14*l.* a week, economy being the order of the day; and they have engaged, by way of economy, Bartley at 16*l.* per week, Miss Paton, at 18*l.* per week, Mr. T. P. Cooke, at 12*l.* per week, Mr. Evans, at 6*l.* or 9*l.* per week,—making a total of 52*l.* per *week*. The poor dressers are reduced in their allowance — *two* candles instead of *four*—&c. &c. By such miserable shifts, making the poorest part of the community smart the most, the new concern hope to save a fortune. I am sure they ought; for I think they should be devilishly well paid for all the uncomfortable twinges it must cost them to pinch and squeeze so niggardly, so wretchedly, as they do! Drury-Lane gives 30*l.* a week to

Miss Stephens, and 10*l.* per night more, if she sings more than thrice in a week. Liston, I don't know, but I believe firmly 40*l.* per week. Your humble servant engaged for thirty nights at 20*l.* per night, and my benefit: ten nights, which I am now in the course of playing; ten more in January; ten more after Easter holidays. So, my affairs go on, thank God, very well. Adieu, dear Mathews! Take care of your health, and all will do well.

God bless You! Your's very truly,

C. M. YOUNG.

Remember me to Mr. Price and Cooper. You are not to conclude that I have not, and do not, sympathize with you, because I don't touch on an infernal subject. But I do trust and hope all will end well and brilliantly yet.

N.B.—I have just planted a tree in your grounds, which goes by my name henceforward. It is placed so as to hide an odious house in the high road, which you will not now be enabled to see, *it* being out of *sight!*

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Baltimore, Oct. 4th, 1822.

On or about this day I am flattering myself with your having received your first letter. I am still in the rudest health, and have not felt one moment's weakness, indisposition, ache, or pain, since my arrival. The excessive heat is now abated, and blankets are put on the beds. By-the-bye, I never told you that Sir Astley Cooper performed his promise; I am perfectly restored, and confident of a radical cure having been effected.* Mr. and Mrs.

* A local complaint, of which I do not now remember the nature.—A. M.

Price arrived here yesterday, on a visit. He has been to New York, where the actors are playing away in spite of the fever. Indeed they treat it very lightly here. It is an unforeseen and unavoidable calamity; and under the circumstances it was lucky that I did not lose more time, as this is almost the only place in which I could act with credit, until I had made an impression there. On all hands it is agreed that, although great difference of opinion has existed about all the other London stars, as to their talents, there is only one about me. I am sure I shall be well received, judging from this audience. I don't know an instance of a point failing which I considered to be really good myself. They have a quick and nice perception of character, and seize instantaneously on a little natural touch of look or manner, quite unconnected with an intended point. I am quite satisfied of past effects; and have every reasonable confidence in my prospects. It is a very curious reflection, and one to which it is difficult to reconcile myself, but whenever I think of you (and it is not unfrequently that I do, you may suppose,) I am obliged to make a calculation of the difference of the time between England and America, created by the degrees of longitude. This would have been still more difficult had I not been regularly initiated into it day after day, during our voyage. We had a chronometer with us, and I never altered my watch; so that every day, keeping my time by England, and marking the progress, when about half our voyage was completed, the sun, which was twelve with us, was half-past two with you; and so progressively until a difference of five hours was marked on our arrival on the American coast. This has been a constant subject of interesting conjecture with me. At 12 o'clock, for instance, in my mind's eye, I see Charley arriving at Highgate to dinner, and kissing

his anxious mother, for then it is five with you. I am now writing in beautiful sunshine, and you are reading by candle-light, and Charley drawing, and perhaps gaping, and talking of bed; and just as you are retiring to bed, I am beginning to dress for the performance; and, by the time I go to bed, I see Charley getting up. Now you may amuse yourselves with the same "thick coming fancies."

The people here are very anxious to be civil to me, in private as well as public. I went to a party last night—between forty and fifty, a grand display to show what could be done. I felt myself quite remarkable from a curious cause, for I was the only person literally of the party that was not in boots.* There were no ladies! though mine host was a family man; but I am told that this would not have made any difference. Still I will not make any remarks (like *Pillet*) after three weeks' knowledge of the people. Many things are very odd,—the lower orders unendurable. Still, however, I hear, "Ah! you 'll find it very different in New York." The *gentlemen* are good, and so they are everywhere; and if Blackey was sweet, he is a good fellow too. I have not met with a white waiter, and (barring the *musk*) I am glad of it: for they are educated to be insolent. Two articles I may truly say I have never tasted until I arrived in this country,— Madeira and melons. Port—Oh, Day! Oh, Martin! Mais arretez, *Monsieur Pillet!*†

C. MATHEWS.

* He did not anticipate how soon this would become the fashion in England also: boots (and black handkerchiefs), even at the Opera.—A.M.

† *Monsieur Pillet*, it may be recollected, wrote a book upon England a few years ago, after a brief and partial knowledge of the manners and customs of its inhabitants; and, amongst other

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Baltimore, Oct. 13th, 1822.

Here I am still, and still kept in suspense with respect to New York. The fever is gradually subsiding, but perfect confidence will not be established until a frost: and this is so thoroughly ascertained to be the destroyer of the infection, that the inhabitants will immediately return to the proscribed districts. I have not finished my engagement here, as we were obliged to close the theatre on account of an election — a scene of disorder and tumult not inferior to our most noisy Westminster's. Indeed it has very much hurt my effects at the theatre, for it has occasioned much drunkenness and noise, and of course, inattention; and, added to pouring rain, has hurt the receipts. My benefit is next Monday, and I shall decidedly have a bumper; after that I shall go to Philadelphia to meet the Prices, who left this place yesterday. I cannot possibly make any calculation of my future plans until I have seen their theatrical capital, where I am led to expect immense success. This is one of the towns that I should have reserved for myself hereafter, but I have every reason to believe that my present trip will not interfere with an

perversions, having one day seen a lady, on some occasion, disgrace herself and her sex by drinking a large quantity of brandy, affected to believe that *all* English ladies did the same. Thus imitating Voltaire's famous traveller; who, when finding at the first inn he rested at in Alsace, a drunken landlord and a red-haired landlady, wrote down among his *memoranda*, "All men of Alsace are drunkards, and all women red-haired!" Mr. Mathews, in one of his "At Homes," satirized this work of *Monsieur Pillet*, in the character of a French lecturer on English manners and Customs. — A. M.

after-visit, as I am most especially invited to return and take the Assembly Rooms; there are so many persons here who will not go into a theatre, that would not object to a room. As to my success, it fully equals the most brilliant of my efforts.

On Tuesday letters arrived here from England; and Price had one from Miller. I need not say to you what were my sensations upon finding there was not one from you. Newspapers, &c., all from Miller, and remembrances from him to me, and not one word about you, but that he was afraid you would hear there had been an American vessel, called the Liverpool, lost, and that you were "wretchedly low already." However, it is my fate: I was never yet from home that some mysterious causes did not keep me from the knowledge of those who are so dear to me. Perhaps a day or two will clear it up, and I must hope for the best. I am cheered in some degree by the feeling that by this time my letters will be in regular course of arrival. Europeans, I find, invariably bear this climate better than the natives, and even in the sickly places are not generally subject to disease. Nothing can exceed the kindness and attention I have received here. Letters are totally unnecessary, as I had cards left the first three days from several of the principal inhabitants. Dr. Patisson has been particularly attentive, and drives me out in the country quite in my own way; and I have all sorts of invitations, which I cannot accept. The country is beautiful about this place, and I have very much enjoyed my leisure time. Let me hear that you are cheerful, if not happy; for be assured, my greatest earthly desire is to establish the comfort and independence of you and my dear Charles.

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Philadelphia, Oct. 19th, 1822.

I am going back to Baltimore to-day, and thence to-morrow to Washington, where I perform by myself two nights; then return to Philadelphia, and stay till I go to New York, which we have every reason to hope will be opened by the 1st of November. My benefit at Baltimore produced 1000 dollars, a large sound, but really a large house too, about 230*l.* sterling; — a greater house by 100 dollars than Cooke or Kean had. They will give me 100*l.* still, weekly, for three weeks — what is called, out of the fire, for, under the calamitous circumstances under which I have been knocked about, it is most lucky indeed to have such a resource; the Philadelphia Theatre has not yet risen from its ashes, and will not be finished until December. I have found from various causes, besides the approach of *blues*, that a horse is absolutely necessary; and I have purchased one, and mean to ride every day. This, I am sure, you will be glad to hear. The compliment paid me at Baltimore, which under all circumstances was one of the greatest ever received, has satisfied me of the actual enthusiasm of the Americans towards me. Price, and Wood the Philadelphia manager, have offered me 50*l.* per night certain for twenty nights, each, which I have refused, having no doubt that I can and shall get 100*l.* I am more and more certain of complete success. The effect upon the audience at my benefit was certainly more rapturous than anything that ever occurred.

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Philadelphia, Oct. 31st, 1822.

If I have suffered anxiety on your account, my relief has afforded me joy in proportion. I never experienced so delightful a sensation as when I opened your packet, and saw your dear hand, and the "All 's well." I have never been so long without hearing from you before; it is now a month at least since I received your first letter. Up to the last moment I was doomed to suspense; my old letter luck attended me. You have not sent me Lord Blessington's address abroad. I have been in one continued state of good health since I have been here, although surrounded with horrors. This has been the most sickly season known here for twenty years. It is now safely over, and New York declared healthy. The frost has commenced, and the inhabitants are returning; but Baltimore was every jot as bad as New York, though the inhabitants did not fly, but forty and forty-five died weekly of yellow fever while I was there, and I never knew it till a few days previously to my quitting. It was certainly confined to the Wapping of the city, and was *called* Bilious Fever. So unwholesome was the air in some places, that George caught the ague and fever at Washington in a few hours, and *after* my return I was told that scarcely one of the theatrical corps had escaped during the season. I verily believe, if I had not had a horse I should have been ill there too. I rode the journey, thirty-six miles, and back. I went on my own account. The greatest house ever known there before was 380 dollars. I had 550, and crowds went away. I played a second night, and, under peculiar disadvantages, got 350; a very small theatre. This made 900 dollars in two nights. 444 dollars are 100*l.* sterling. This has shown

me what I can do alone. Indeed, I have peremptorily refused to go to any of the managers, excepting in the three great towns; though I am inundated with letters, and have been obliged to act, for the people demanded it; and I have not repented. I have acted *Monsieur Tonson* with prodigous effect.

My next I expect will give you an account of a splash, for of New York I am most sanguine. I am off to-day on horseback. Lovely weather, all sunshine, and in high spirits. I *will* take care of myself, rely upon it. A thousand thanks for your assurances of affection; be assured of the hourly *increase* of mine. Love to Charley.

C. MATHEWS.

CHAPTER XIV.

New York. — The Weather in America. — Republican Rudeness. —The Yellow Fever. — Alarming Mortality. — Mr. Mathews's Appearance on the New York Stage. — His enthusiastic Reception. — Hospitality of the higher Classes. — Society of New York. — A sore Point with the Americans. — A Fanatic. — Mr. Mathews one of the Causes of the Yellow Fever. — Severity of the Winter in America.

It will have been seen in the foregoing chapter that the letters from America of Mr. Mathews were, in fact, a journal of his Transatlantic tour. I now resume them at his second arrival at New York.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

New York, Nov. 7th, 1822.

Here I am at last; and, thank God, health and confidence are restored here. This is really a delightful city, with as much bustle as London or Paris; but bearing a greater resemblance to Dublin in many particulars than to the former. The want of handsome equipages and well-dressed persons is particularly striking to an Englishman. At present it is a scene of the greatest possible noise and confusion. I believe I explained to

you that there was a part of the city only that had been declared infected. From this part the whole of the inhabitants fled. Imagine the effect of the Strand from Bedford Street, all Charing Cross, Cockspur Street, Haymarket, and so on, across to Covent Garden, being entirely depopulated; and then these persons all returning on a sudden to their dwellings; their furniture, which had been taken to different country dwellings, and to distant parts of the city, all being brought back. You may then fancy what I am now witnessing. The bustle is very cheering to the natives, as it proclaims the return of health and business; but it is very distressing to me, for the noise is overpowering. I arrived here on Saturday evening last, after a three-days' ride from Philadelphia, ninety miles, which I performed with ease in half an hour less than the given time, as I found Price's dinner ready in that time after my arrival. This month is particularly delightful here: it is what is called their Indian summer. Very seldom is a cloud to be seen, and no fogs. For the last ten days it has been all sunshine, and a perfectly clear sky; and you know what a blessing that is for me. The nights, to be sure, are cold. When the really hard weather sets in, which they say is much more severe than ours, I shall suffer, for here all are wood fires, and to these I never can be reconciled. You have been in Paris only in summer, and therefore you do not know this horror. The want of cheerfulness and civility is striking, and the egregious folly of the middle and lower orders in their fancied independence, is calculated to produce a smile of thorough contempt rather than anger. It consists in studied sullenness, the determination never to be civil or apparently kind to a fellow-creature, and not to bow, or say thank ye, to a person they know to be their superior, for they

affect not to believe in it. The upper orders (for there *are* upper orders, and must be, though it is not allowed here) either like it, or are compelled to submit to it. I cannot quite make up my mind which is the real case. The manager of a theatre tells me that it is not in his power to induce the lamplighter or carpenter, when he walk's into the green-room before ladies, to take off his hat; and this is allowed; and must be submitted to, they tell me. No carriages are closed here in summer, (nor in winter, I should think,) and the driver will smoke a segar, and a lady dares not ask him to desist though the smoke blinds her, because the odds are, that he will say he has a *right* to smoke, and every man must do as he likes in an independent state. A few days before I left Baltimore I travelled in a stage-coach a short distance. The coachman, an awkward, dirty, cadaverous-looking hound, that would be thought too shabby for a stable-boy in England, turned round to the passengers (for the driving-seat is a part of the coach, and not an elevated box as with us) and said, "Has anybody got any tobacco, for I 'm out?" —"I chew, sir," said a passenger. "Give me a bit, will you?—Thank'ye, *General*."—"Judge,* will you have a quid. I got plenty now."—A fact! I have seen this *General* since in company, and, "barring" the quid, really a gentleman by education and travel, fit for any society. I ventured to ask him, how he could endure such familiarity? and added, that persons of his rank appeared to me to cherish and encourage what is distinctly offensive to foreigners. He replied—"All such men have votes."

I need not say what a feast it was to me to receive two

* Judge Johnson, of Orleans, and a member of the Congress. A. M.

large packets the moment I arrived on Saturday night. I am quite delighted with the plan of your journal; it is a happy thought, and I am very grateful to you for your kind anxiety to amuse me. Pray continue on the same plan. Price has offered to ensure 75*l.* per night, an advance of 25*l.* This looks well; but still I take my chance of my shares, better or worse. Price, and Mrs. Price too, beg all sort of kind things may be said to you in return for yours to them.

If you see Miller, tell him I have got a lodging on the English plan at New York. I told him I never would board, if I *starved*, but he assured me I *must*. Tell him I never have, and never will. I am informed, that out of a population of a hundred and twenty thousand I am the only person who has got a lodging to himself. In short, the only person who can be alone if he wishes it; and I *do* wish it, and never enjoyed solitary pleasure so luxuriously as here. God bless and preserve you and dear Charles, for the sake of him who loves you more and more as time goes on. Ever, ever affectionately yours,

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

New York, Nov. 15th, 1822.

I have had the pleasure of receiving a few pages more of your journal; and I am more than delighted at the cheerful tone of it, and find that "the first fit of blues" is not recorded until the middle of September. I am now familiarized to the subject, and understand the mysteries and peculiarities of the yellow fever, which only a residence on the spot can possibly make one acquainted with. The impression that we Europeans have of its contagious qualities is, that it is like the plague. Now the fact is, that

out of one hundred and twenty thousand inhabitants (to be sure a great proportion fled), only twenty-eight died. You may remember that I gave you an account of a poor victim in the ship, of whom we made sport, who was constantly in a state of intoxication. He was panic-struck about the fever; and when I got the only bed that was vacant at Hoboken, on the opposite shore, he begged hard to be taken into the same house. When I fled to Bristol, I sent George to him to say he might have my bed. He lived only three weeks; he had, it is true, undermined his constitution. They swear here that it was not *the* fever; but if it was not, he died of fright. From that hour America has been to me a large hospital; and all conversation a mere medical report. I had been in Baltimore more than a fortnight before I found that the yellow fever existed there stronger than in New York, and with more fatal consequences; forty-five, forty, and thirty-five deaths occurring in three succeeding weeks. What think you of this? Was it not enough to appal me? One-half of the actors were ill of ague, which they brought from Washington; so that I was surrounded by "horrors and distraction." It really was melancholy. Had poor Charley been here, he could not have survived, or any body of such constitution. Thanks to a good one, and a rigid adherence to my plan of diet, I lay like Manly on the wreck of the Apollo, and saw my comrades dying around me. "What could induce you to come here, Sir, during our sickness?" was consoling to hear; but this assailed me on every side. The simple fact was, that the newspapers which do and will govern everything, announced the yellow fever at New York with exaggeration, but artfully concealed the disease at Baltimore under the title of "bilious malignant," which did not prevent strangers from visiting them. It was marvellous that

with this drawback, my theatrical success was so great. It would have been double, doubtless, but for the sickness. The loss has been great to me; but I have escaped, thank God! and have never had one moment's illness since I arrived. No language, however, can describe to you the wretched effect of the regular report of relations, friends, &c. at Washington. I inquired for Mr. Law, a nephew of Lord Ellenborough, to whom I had a letter. Knocked at the door,—"*Oh! my master's dead!*" Inquired for Mr. Paterson, to whom I had a letter from Washington Irving,—"*Out of town.*" Engaged to dine with Mrs. Paterson, in his absence,—excuse stated, the "*sister dead!*" "General Ridgley's compliments to Mr. Mathews—honour of his company to dinner on Friday." Friday arrives,—"*General Ridgley's compliments,—sorry, but the death of his daughter prevents,*" &c. On my return from Washington, I actually went, letter in hand, to Mr. Paterson,—"*Oh! Sir, my master died last night!*" I will close here. You will understand what I have felt. 'Tis now over; but be satisfied of this, that this disease never existed in July, August, or September, and from this month the climate is very healthy. The present month is particularly delicious,—warm nights and Italian days. The sun is now shining with splendour and brightness, without a cloud, and no heat.

Now to turn to the bright part of the picture. I have made my appearance here, and have made a prodigious hit. Price has just shown himself a capital politician. You know how I fought against appearing in the regular drama, and had determined, up to the time I saw him in Baltimore, that I would not be moved from my fixed resolve. The Baltimore audience, however, were noisy, and they drove me from my table, and I took to the drama in despair; for I was out of heart, out of humour, and out

of pocket. So I acted *Duberly** and the "*Polly Packet*," — *Solomon Gundy*,† and "*Diligence*," *Monsieur Tonson*. I think I told you I had acted with great effect,— certainly one of my very best efforts in or out of the legitimate line. Well, Price saw me act *Goldfinch* and *Tonson* one night, and came round and said, "Those, Sir, are the two parts you open in at New York; they have seen nothing like your *Goldfinch*,‡ Sir, and it must be so." I gave way; for to say truth I had doubts that all American audiences were like Baltimore; and in that case I had long secretly determined to embark at New York, and sneak home again. Nothing, however, can be more complete than the contrast,—nothing more brilliant and decisive than my success. I opened to the greatest stock house ever known,— much greater than that of Cooke or Kean. Nearly 1,800 dollars! My reception was more than rapturous; *I* never recollect anything more joyous in my life. They infused me with fun; I was in tip-top spirits; and the songs were hailed with shouts. The *Tonson* was equal in effect to the most successful of my former personations; and at the dropping of the curtain, huzzas cheered my efforts. This was an important night, as you say, and I am sorry that it was not the second communication, as you anticipated; but I am content. The whole tone of my future proceedings will be taken from this night. This is the London of America; and I was forced to play at Doncaster *first*. All the places were taken for my benefit. Therefore Price calculated cleverly, that to begin the entertainments until my second engagement, would be throwing them away. I have my benefit on the

* *Lord Duberly* in "The Heir at Law."
† In "Who wants a Guinea."— A. M.
‡ In "The Road to Ruin."—A. M.

eighth night,—then make a fresh engagement with all my novelty. Now we have had 1600 dollars to "The Heir-at-Law," and second night of *Tonson*. Rely upon it, the business is done, and my expedition will be completely successful. Of the loss of time we must not think.

Love to dear Charles; and say how I rejoice that he has obtained the Delphin Classics. I beg that he may be indulged to his wish in such pursuits, during my absence. God bless you both, prays daily your truly affectionate

C. MATHEWS.

TO MR. MILLER.

DEAR MILLER, New York, Nov. 15th, 1822.

In happier times I now address you. Here we are—confidence restored—fever gone—infected district once more partly inhabited. I firmly believe you know nothing of the horrors of the yellow fever by newspaper report; for it appears, as far as I have read, to have created little sensation or interest in England, and up to the 27th of September, I am happy to find the news had not reached Highgate. My greatest unhappiness was the anticipation of the probable effect of the calamity on my family. I wrote to you in a great hurry, and informed you that I had taken up my quarters at Hoboken, where I remained one night. You have not been here at the time of such a misery; and therefore you have not been an eye-witness of the more than childish weakness of the natives respecting this scourge. Every individual is as sore upon the subject as the —— are about dirt. It is not contagious, he swears; and yet he makes every creature perform quarantine that comes from the infected city. I thought myself secure at Hoboken; I was told I was the only lodger. A young man presented himself at tea, argued against con-

tagion, and, with most dramatic effect upon me, added, "For instance, I was the only person who caught it of my mother, who died of it."—"What, then! you have had it?"—"Oh, yes! Just recovered from it; and am staying here for five days, that I may swear I have left New York so long, or they will not let me into Philadelphia!" I ran away next day to Bristol; gave my birth to a poor fellow-passenger in the William Thompson, an Englishman. He died in three weeks; but it was "*not* yellow fever." Mr. Simpson was *sick*.—Price swears it was pleurisy. Now, I am here, it is confessed that it was the yellow fever. Mr. Wood engaged me for Baltimore—"Our city is healthy; the fewest deaths." During three weeks' residence there were thirty-three deaths weekly. One week there were forty-five,—by "*bilious fever!*" The press managed it there; here they are not so daring. They proclaimed it; thousands fled, and one part of the city was totally depopulated; barriers were erected to prevent all intercourse; and now they tell you that only three hundred died. Why?—because the inhabitants did not remain, and place their faith in the declaimers for no contagion. Dr. Paterson, of Baltimore, told me that the disease there was decidedly yellow fever. However, I thank God, I have never been *sick*, as they call it, once; and it is really wonderful that, surrounded by such horrors, I had 1000 dollars at my benefit. In Orleans five hundred died in a fortnight; and in one of the newspapers to-day, I read—"Our latest accounts represent that the yellow fever continued to assail the inhabitants. Out of fourteen hundred, not four hundred souls remain."—No governor, council, police, or post-office. If you get a letter from an American, however, I am sure he will say that the accounts have been exaggerated.

I opened to nearly 1800 dollars; and am keeping up to 1200 and 1400, though the inhabitants are not yet all returned. I am delighted with the audience. My reception was rapturous; and I argue greatly of the result. God bless you. Remember me kindly to Mrs. Miller. You may say to those who inquire after me, that I am in high health and spirits.

Yours very sincerely,

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

New York, Nov. 23d, 1822.

I have so frequently written in high-flowing terms of my success in my tours, that I have almost exhausted every term of surprise or admiration; but *this is* the most extraordinary hit I have ever made. Last night I had my first benefit, and I shall always think it the greatest compliment ever paid me. The torrents of rain which fell during the whole day (and we in England don't know what rain is) would have totally destroyed the house in any town in which I have ever been. I had to wait for a hackney coach until the time I ought to have been on the stage; but walking was out of the question, as nothing short of drowning appeared inevitable. It was thought by all that it would injure the house very materially, as scarcely any private carriages are kept here. When I went in, to my great surprise as well as delight, Price said, "Well, Sir, here they are. Your house is full. This is the greatest compliment ever paid to an actor in New York. I don't believe that there is any other man that would have had such a house as this on such a night." There were 1800 dollars; which is nearly as much as the house will hold. The rain must have done

some injury; else it would have overflowed instead of being full; and I believe that is all the difference. No enthusiasm ever was greater. Price has shown his judgment greatly in this engagement. I told you in my last the origin of my taking to the drama. The entertainments were asked for every day at the box-office, and the cry you *must* give them, or the houses will fall off; and on the sixth night, a wet night too, we had 1400 dollars to *Goldfinch*, the second time, and *Tonson*, the third time. Price justly said, "Should we not be fools to throw away our strength, when they come in this way to very weakness?" Well, I must do one of them for my own night. On Wednesday I start with the "Trip to Paris." The eventful period of which you were so anxious to hear is arrived; it is prosperous beyond our hopes. I look upon the remainder of my work as a settled point. All other towns will take their tone from this, as in England from London; and the curiosity to see me is such that Cooper and Phillips, the only stars excepting Booth, say that they fail because the people are hoarding up their dollars to see me. I send you a copy of a few lines in the newspaper of Wednesday.

A very handsome compliment has been paid to Mathews, such as cannot be soon forgotten by him. We learn that a party of gentlemen have chartered the steam-boat The Fly, to bring them down from Albany (two hundred miles) to his benefit to-morrow evening; thus making a journey, to and fro, of four hundred miles, to be gratified in witnessing his powers for one evening.

Another unsought puff caught my eye: —

The proprietors of the Brooklyn boat inform the public, that the steam-vessels Fulton and Active, will, on the occasion of Mr. Mathews's benefit, start from Brooklyn at half-past five, and remain to carry the passengers back after the play.

These boats never cross the ferry after five on other occasions. Does not this look well? This morning I read —

Dr. Hosack informs the medical students that, in consequence of the tempest last night, which compelled him to postpone his lectures, &c.

I now send the receipts of the eight nights; and I think, and Price says he is sure of it, the next will keep up to the mark.

	DOLLARS.
Road to Ruin—Tonson . . .	1700
Poor Gentleman—Sleepwalker . .	962
Heir-at-Law—Tonson . . .	1401
Who Wants a Guinea?—Killing No Murder	1178
Henry IV.—Lying Valet . .	1214
Road to Ruin—Tonson . . .	1420
Beaux Stratagem—Actor of All Work .	1287
Wild Oats—Do. Do. . . .	1800

Let this suffice until we meet. Be satisfied, though, you understand it, and the dollars may dazzle you too much (444 dollars are 100*l.* observe). I have received above 800*l.* for my eight nights!! This is superior to anything I ever did out of London. I have gained 25*l.* per night by sharing.

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

New York, Nov. 30th, 1822.

I commenced a second engagement on Wednesday last, with the "Trip to Paris," to the best house I have yet played to, being upwards of 1800 dollars,—some few more than my benefit. Truth to say, I was sorry for it. The theatre is quite as large as that of Covent-Garden; and the difference between 4*s.* 6*d.* boxes and 7*s*, with the receipts I

have hitherto sent you, will make this apparent. It was too full to obtain the sort of silent attention that my "Table-Talk" requires. The countenance and varieties of its expression were necessarily lost to a large proportion of the audience; and I therefore felt the want of powers to produce my usual effects. I do not speak so much of the consequence on this night, as the evident effects of the report that the auditors then present made of it to others who were not there the second night. "The Polly Packet" fell off to 1000 dollars; and I found a coldness in the audience during the Table acts each night, that was very opposite to the effects produced upon them by my acting. The dramatic parts, third act of each, were as effective as they have been elsewhere. My Frenchman is the most relished here; and I should imagine that a far greater proportion of Americans visit France than of English. A phrase of broken English is a certain roar; and *Tonson*, *Talma*, *Jeu Singe*, and *Peremptoire*, are extolled, and certainly appreciated and understood to perfection. My "At Home," indefinable in its title, and unexplained in its character, raised an expectation that I fear was not to be satisfied by mortal powers. Yet it was not a failure. The upper orders highly admire it; but the other ranks of persons appear at a loss how to designate it. "It will rise, be assured, as it is better understood," say my friends. "The Youthful Days" did rise, and went admirably. On the third night I performed "The Mail Coach Adventures," and "Tonson" again. The house is nearly all taken again for my second benefit; and Price is yet sanguine as ever about a third engagement, after my return from Boston, where I go on quitting this place.

In the mean time, the attentions paid to me in private are highly gratifying. An ambassador from St. James's could

not be more handsomely received. In point of compliments paid to an actor of reputation, they are far beyond our own country. Letters of recommendation are unnecessary. Generals, commodores (admirals here), judges, barristers, and merchants, have left their cards for me. Judge Irving, a brother of Washington Irving, called, and introduced himself. Had I time and inclination, I might get into a round of visiting in the very highest society, which is much more desirable and infinitely more polished than the English in general are willing to believe. The climate, from its sudden and severe changes, is very trying; but I have uniformly enjoyed good health, and am insensible to the effects of the climate. I am as cheerful and contented as I can be, when absent from all I hold dear. That God may preserve you both in health and happiness is the daily prayer of your ever truly affectionate

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

New York, Dec. 7th, 1822.

The cold is intense, and I am told it is nothing to what may be expected. We have already had snow enough to spoil one or two of my houses. However, an indifferent house will yield me nearly 50*l.* sterling. My own entertainments do not hit here so well as at Baltimore; the general belief is, that they are too local for Americans, who have not visited Europe, to understand. This would, however, have equally applied at Baltimore. The truth is, the theatre is too large for the effects. Price has shown himself an admirable politician. Had I commenced with my entertainment, I am convinced my attraction afterwards would not have

been what it is now; and my feelings are by no means hurt that here they think me an actor,—"a very natural actor, and the only comedian that has ever been seen in America that was not extravagant." The word mimic has never been flung in my teeth; and without songs or imitations, or any of those extra aids, which even in Edinburgh I required, I can draw a house. That *Goldfinch* and *Tonson* are good for 1500 dollars is a bet *now* (when I return).

I finish my second engagement here on Friday next, to a great house (this is already settled), and then, I believe, go to Boston. I am very much pleased with the society of New York, and gradually like it better. I have seen nothing but the upper ranks lately, and they are very delightful people. The woman with whom I lodge is the widow of an Englishman, and therefore knows all our habits. The servants are negroes, and therefore I have no dealings with the sulky-looking Yankee. I do not even buy my own gloves,—the shopkeepers are so very angry when you purchase anything of them.

If you ever see the Bartleys, who are engaged, I hear, at Covent-Garden, pray say to them how much I am delighted with Dr. Hosack and his family: they are the real sterling goods, and I am quite at home with them. They ask me to *entertain me*,—to afford me quiet repose after my labours. "*My* children, you must not talk to Mr. Mathews; he talks too much in public to be disposed to answer all your questions." This is rare, and I value it.

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

New York, Dec. 15th, 1822.

The great pleasure I felt in receiving your letters was much damped by the melancholy tone of expression respecting my situation. It is curious enough that on the 9th of October I dreamed about you, or had a sort of vision of your being very unhappy, or ill, or that something very distressing had happened; but the effect your expression of countenance produced on me (when silently you shook your head as if you dreaded to inform me of the worst), was such, that I could scarcely speak at breakfast, I was so wretchedly out of spirits. Price laughed, but Mrs. Price felt very kindly for me; and, knowing that I had not then heard from home, sympathized with me. I requested her to make a memorandum of the date, and I find it was the evening when Elizabeth had first so abruptly mentioned the yellow fever to you.*

I was nearly a fortnight in Baltimore before I discovered that the yellow fever was raging in one part of that city, for, mysterious as it is, it is certain that the infection is always confined to districts. I first discovered it by Wood, the manager, twice refusing to show me a part of the town I was curious to see. He refused peremptorily to walk that way; and I then said, "Well, I suppose you won't prevent my walking there alone. There is a turn in the river in that part so beautifully romantic, that I will have a walk there."—"For God's sake, don't

* My maid, who could not resist *preparing* me for the contents of her master's first letter, as she delivered it, by revealing her previous knowledge respecting the fever.—A. M.

go near it!" he cried; and then the murder was out. "It is not healthy," and so on. The same pains were taken to keep the news from me that, in a more friendly way, was practised towards you. Dr. Pattison, a Scotsman, with whom I was intimate at Baltimore, said that he had watched me narrowly—and, finding from my health and habits, that I was not a subject for it, believing also firmly that the disease was not infectious, and that it was certainly confined to a part of the city, a mile and a half from that part in which I lived, he thought it better to keep the fact from me as long as possible, as fear alone will sometimes occasion disease.

The folly and weakness of people here about the fever can hardly be described. An Irishman will as willingly confess that Dublin is a dirty place, as an American that the yellow fever is of native origin,—it is a sore point; it is next to an affront, even to Price, to say it is contagious. Nay, the humbug is kept up for effect even in letters written to England. Price was sent for post-haste to New York. He met me afterwards at Philadelphia, three days after his time. I received a letter informing me that Simpson* was ill of the pleurisy. On his arrival, I said, "Well, has Simpson got over the fever?"—"Who said he had the fever, Sir? It is not true, Sir." Nothing could annoy him so much. Not forty-eight hours after, Mrs. Price said, "I am astonished, Mr. Price, you should join in that absurd deception that the fever is not infectious?"—"I do say so still," said he; and in an unguarded moment, in heat of argument, said afterwards, to my great triumph, "Was I not almost two days by Simpson's bedside, who had it as bad as man could, and did I catch it?" Yet does he write to Miller that it has been greatly exag-

* Mr. Price's partner.—A. M.

gerated! The company were all cautioned to read pleurisy for fever. It was marvellous that the people could be induced to go to the theatre. I suffered horribly by it, as you may imagine; but I may without vanity say that I was the only person now living who could have brought houses during the calamity. You can have no notion of the wretchedness of the scene and its associations; or the coolness with which it is treated here. They die at twelve o'clock on Tuesday, and in twenty-four hours afterwards they are buried; and all sensation appears to cease with the friends of the parties. Twice I knocked at doors with letters of Washington Irving in my hand,—"Mr. Paterson at home?" —"I guess he died last night!" "Mr. ——— at home?" —the same answer. Ten people at Baltimore said angrily to me, "Who told you Robert Paterson died of yellow fever?" I could have said—the physician who attended him, who laughs at your self-deception, but dares not avow it. "I hope you will come to Washington: our city is *quite healthy*," said several. I went; George was attacked with fever and ague the moment he arrived there. It was the most unhealthy of all the United States. Can you conceive such folly? An English surgeon, who introduced himself to me, again was the exposer. "Take my advice, Sir, and don't stay here long." This was on the second night of my performance. On the morning after, for the first time, I felt queer. It was nervousness, I now know. Mr. Burke accompanied me in the Adolphus line. I went to George's bedside at nine in the morning. Such a spectacle! "Have you courage to be moved!"—"Oh! yes, Sir." "Can we get a private carriage, Mr. Burke?" (There are no post-chaises here, or horses on the road.) —"Yes." "To take us thirty-six miles to Baltimore?" —"Yes; but it will delay you an hour, perhaps two." "Never mind; I feel that if I stay half an hour in this

place I shall be very ill,—at any rate I shall fancy it. I am shivering now, and the thermometer is above 80; I must entreat you, as you are well, that you will humour me. No third night, if you please. Tell those people who are waiting my answer from George Town I am gone —settle my bills—wrap George up in a blanket—and get away from this place as soon as you can—I am off!" and away I went. I ran for about a quarter of a mile, till I saw the Capitol behind me.

Nothing can be more healthy than this city is now. Once more let me assure you that that scourge, the yellow fever, occurs only in the middle of summer, and that only in unusually hot seasons. I therefore do not imagine that there is any cause for apprehension, as I shall leave the country before the approach of hot weather, which never sets in till June. I have dwelt so much upon feverish subjects, that I have hardly room to give you any theatrical information; but I can truly, though briefly, say, that I am pursuing a career of great success. The actual crowding has diminished,—that of course must be expected; but I have hitherto exceeded in receipts all the stars that have gone before me, and my second benefit produced 1200 dollars. Do not suppose this is falling off. It was as great as the first. Consider a second advertized night, within a fortnight of the first. I am hurrying off from Boston, in consequence of circumstances too tedious to mention. The probabilities are, that I play there next week. God bless you both, my darlings! Pray keep up your spirits: and believe me, when I tell you that I am as cheerful, contented, and happy as I can be, so far removed from you both. Accept, my dearest wife, the renewed assurances of my steady and unalterable affection.

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

New York, Dec. 18th, 1822.

The Packet of the first of October, from Liverpool, is not yet arrived, though she has sailed forty-nine days. You may judge from the average what a lucky passage ours was. My success here has drawn down the vengeance of a fanatic, who is popular in his way. He preached a sermon, called "The Pestilence — a Punishment for Public Sins;" in which he points out the causes of the late scourge to the city, and he "happens to know" them all — the theatre, and me in particular. By a most amusing anachronism, he makes out that my drawing crowds together in November was one of the causes of a pestilence which commenced in July. Take his own words, as published by himself.

"What, I pray you, are we to think of the state of society among us, when at the very moment that God's pestilence was the heaviest upon us, we are credibly told, in one of our public gazettes, that the non-appearance of a celebrated comedian upon our stage, in consequence of our calamity, has cast as much gloom over our city as the fever itself! Must not we conclude, that the spirit of dissipation is deeply rooted among us, when we find at this very time (when our inhabitants are called more solemnly than ever they were before to consider their ways and humble themselves before God), the theatre,—that school of Satan!—that nursery for hell!—is overflowing, night after night, with our citizens, to witness the mimicries of an actor, whom God Almighty has *sent* here at this very time in his *wrath*, as a man better qualified, by all accounts, than any other in the world to dissipate every serious reflection, and harden men

in folly and sin? If such be our spirit as a community, have we not deserved God's chastisements? Can we not find in *this* thirst after dissipation a fruitful cause of our LATE calamity? Shall not God be avenged on such a city?"

But I am not the only cause: he points out others. The second cause is the inordinate appetite for gain, which has pervaded almost all classes of the community.

"The God of heaven has shown, this season, how he can blast the god whom so many in our city worship—I mean Mammon. Merchants, mechanics, and tradesmen, have too generally been striving with each other who can most rapidly acquire fortunes, without much regard as to the manner in which they obtained them. Very few have honoured God as they *ought* with their *substance* (oh, oh!). Look at the *form* of God's late judgment. The pestilence was sent upon the theatre of our commercial life; it covered the business part of our city; it sucked the very heart's core of our commercial wealth. Now, my hearers, if I had no *other* evidence, this alone would be to my mind *conclusive* proof, that something is radically wrong in the system of business in this city." *

This wretched raver is only twenty-five years of age.

I think I told you in my last, that I would not act in Boston on the same terms as at Baltimore and here, sharing after expenses; and, therefore, demanded a certainty of 50*l.* sterling per night, which, after much unwillingness, they granted, and I open there next Monday.

The shortest day will have passed over before this will leave New York, and then we have something pleasant in

* The sermon was preached by the Rev. Paschal Strong, in the Middle Dutch Church, New York, Nov. 17th, 1822.

perspective. The days are longer here than in Europe; for it is not dark now till five o'clock. I have heard most furious accounts of the severity of the winter, which is much more terrific than ours, excepting that the sun seldom forsakes the sufferers. However, hitherto it has been mild enough,—scarcely any snow, and not enough bad weather to prevent my riding above four or five times. I will thank you, the moment this arrives, to order of Stultz one blue coat. They charge 40 dollars for a coat here. It is a very, very dear country, Mrs. Mathews.

C. MATHEWS.

CHAPTER XV.

Mr. Mathews's Reply to the Rev. Paschal N. Strong.—Letters to Mrs. Mathews; Reception at Boston of Mr. Mathews; Winter in America; A Black Preacher.—Letter from Mr. Mathews to Mrs. Rolls; Yellow Fever in America; American Society; the Lower Orders.—Letters to Mrs. Mathews; Inclemency of the Climate at Boston; American Frolics; Manners of the Upper Ranks.—"A Portrait of Mathews."

It appears that Mr. Mathews could not, on the publication of the sermon quoted in the foregoing letter, resist something like a reply to it before he left America. With a desire, therefore, to alarm the reverend gentleman, by an affected intention of making him a prominent feature in his next English Entertainment, the following letter was written at the last moment, when Mr. Mathews's mind was occupied in preparations for his approaching voyage home.

TO THE REV. PASCHAL N. STRONG.

Sir, New York, 1823.

Ingratitude being in my estimation a crime most heinous and most hateful, I cannot quit the shores of America

without expressing my grateful sense of services which you have gratuitously rendered.

Other professors in "*that school of Satan*, that *nursery of hell!*" as you most appropriately style the theatre, have been, *ex necessitate*, content to have their merits promulgated through the medium of the public papers; but mine you have graciously vouchsafed to blazon from the pulpit.

You have, as appears in your recently published sermon, declared me to be (what humility tells me I only am in your partial and prejudiced estimation) "an actor whom God Almighty sent here as a man better qualified than any other in the world, to dissipate every serious reflection."

What man! what woman! what child! could resist the effects of such a description, coming from such a quarter? particularly as you, at the same time, assured the laughter-loving inhabitants of this city that the punishment incident to such a "thirst after dissipation" had been already inflicted by "their late calamity," the pestilence, "voracious in its *thirst* of *prey!*" and you might have added, thirsty in its *hunger* for *drink*. No wonder that the theatre has since been crowded, the manager enriched, and the most sanguine expectations of him whom you have, perhaps improperly, elevated to the rank of the avenging angel so beautifully described by Addison, completely realized! For each and all of these results accept, reverend sir, my cordial and grateful thanks. Nor deem me too avaricious of your favours, if I venture to solicit more. As you have expressly averred, in the sermon before me, that "God *burnt the theatre of New York*, to rebuke the *devotees of pleasure there resident*," permit me, your humble avenging angel, to inquire, by whom and for

what purpose the cathedrals at Rouen and Venice were recently destroyed by fire, and in a manner which more especially implicated the hand of Providence? But beware, most reverend sir, I conjure you, lest your doctrines of special dispensations furnish arguments and arms to the scoffer and atheist.

One other request, and I have done. You appear too well acquainted with my peculiarities and propensities not to be aware that, when I travel abroad, I am always anxious to collect something *original* and *funny* wherewith to entertain my friends and patrons "At Home." Now, sir, so little do the American people, in general, differ from their parent stock whom it is my object to amuse, that I have as yet scarcely procured anything in which these qualities are united, except your aforesaid sermon; you will, therefore, infinitely oblige me, if you will, on Sunday next, preach *another* on the subject of my angelic attributes; in which case, you may rely on my being a most attentive auditor. I hope to have the opportunity of studying the peculiarities of your style and action. The gracefulness and Christian charity, humility and universal benevolence, which doubtless beam in your expressive countenance, will enable me to produce a picture of prodigious effect, of which all who know the *original* will acknowledge the likeness to be *Strong!*

I have sir, the honour to be, most gratefully your obliged, angelic, yellow-fever-producing friend,

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Boston, Dec. 28th, 1822.

I arrived here in health and safety on Tuesday, after a "teagos passig," when I thought I never should get to Providence. I was advised by Price to go by water, as the most pleasant and convenient, on account of my baggage, and that the average passage was about thirty or forty hours. I had a horror of two hundred and forty miles by land, with the weather so severe as it is here now, and therefore decidedly preferred it. But the wind was contrary, and we were from Thursday morning, nine o'clock, until Monday evening, before we got to Providence, where I landed, and proceeded forty miles by land, and got there time enough to be too late, for I was advertised to appear on Monday evening. Great was the disappointment thereof, for numbers came sixteen miles to see me; but I could not possibly arrive till Tuesday, though Phillips had cold beef ready for me, and waited dinner on Sunday. On my arrival I found a note from Manners, now British consul at Boston, with whom I dined on Christmas-day in a real English style. This is a day not universally observed in this country, either as to public worship, or private jollifications. As it was the 26th in the morning with you before we had left the dinner-table, we drank dear Charley's health, and many happy returns of the day.

On Tuesday night I made my appearance here in *Goldfinch* and *Tonson*—the reception great, and I was confirmed in my opinion that *Morbleu* is my best part. They huzzaed when the curtain fell. To accommodate the disappointed, who could not get in, the play and farce were *encored*, and

repeated last night with equal effect. As I have 50*l.* per night certain, I have not inquired the receipts; but the theatre was crammed. It will not hold quite a thousand dollars, but it was full. This is the place where they were so capricious to Kean, and where he refused to act to a bad house, which was the cause of his quitting America; as he never acted after. It was for this reason I preferred a certainty. You may recollect the circumstance of places being sold by auction; the same thing occurred on Thursday. No money is taken at the doors; and, as in Paris, tickets are issued only for the number the theatre will hold. The proprietors bind the manager down not to sell one more than the stipulated number. On great occasions, (of which only four have occurred, Cooke, Phillips,* Kean, and myself,) people speculate in buying up tickets. It is mobbing work to purchase them. So that the elbowing and overflowing symptoms are displayed of a morning instead of an evening. People who dislike this ceremony as much as I (remember "make room for this *lady* to come out!")† employ porters, &c.—brawny fellows

* Mr. Thomas Phillips, the popular singer, now an able lecturer upon music. Mr. Phillips was the first singer of a scientific character that had ever been heard in America, where he was as prodigious a favourite as he had been previously in London and Dublin.—A. M.

† Mr. Mathews felt excessive terror when in a crowd. At the time when Master Betty drew such immense houses, in 1804, my husband and I, eager to gain admittance on some particular night, and unable to obtain seats previously, agreed to take our chance at the entrance of the theatre with the public. We accordingly established ourselves there at an early hour. During the accumulation of the throng, Mr. Mathews gradually lost courage, and as it thickened so did his fears increase. We had been standing full two hours in this suffocating

—chairmen, who frequently remain there all night. When they have purchased a number of tickets at a dollar each, they will sell them to the highest bidder; and four or six dollars are sometimes given. Last night was a proof that the theatre is not large enough for great occasions, as a repeated performance refilled the house, and fellows took their station at twelve o'clock on Thursday night, and remained till the box-door opened to-day. Nothing can be more rapturous than my reception; and having made my hit here, the thing is established beyond reach of alarm or suspicion. The Bostonians have given themselves a name as critics, and it is said by themselves, that this is more like an English town than any in America,—more literary people, better polished; and larger cities look up much to their opinion. Kean, in one of his speeches from the stage, called it the literary emporium. I shall stay here nearly a month longer, and then back to New York.

I can hardly hold my pen. You have never seen ice, nor felt frost. My water-jug was frozen this morning. The ice was so thick that I could not break it with one of the legs of a chair. I am, thank God, so well that I bear it better than the natives decidedly.

C. MATHEWS.

position, when the doors were suddenly opened. We should have been at the pay-place in one minute more; but my husband's sufferings were at their acme; and, taking me by the wrist with a convulsive shudder as he felt the pressure of the now moving crowd, he shouted out, "Here's a lady fainting!—here's a lady dying!—for God's sake let her out!" And by this *feint* he gained an opening, through which he dragged me, to my great astonishment and chagrin.—A. M.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Boston, Jan. 4th, 1823.

Happy new year to you and dear Charles, and may this meet you in good health and spirits as it leaves me! I ought to consider myself, as indeed I do, one of the most fortunate of men in respect to constitution. I appear to be almost the only person here that is not cut down by the severity of the climate. We know nothing of winter. The English who have been here two or three years can hardly endure it. The first season, it appears, they stood it well. I have not suffered at all. It is a curious and very novel scene, to witness the sleighs here. They are carriages, of various sizes and descriptions, placed upon iron runners without wheels, which they use as long as snow remains upon the ground. They even go long journeys in them. Some of them are in the shape of a balloon car, and go with immense velocity. As they make no noise, small bells are placed on the horses' heads to give notice of approach, so that this town is one continued scene of what some would call merriment. But as neither small nor large bells can convey such a sentiment to me, I have no other idea but a disagreeable ringing in my ears. If the poor horses are annoyed as I am, I pity them. There is "great patronage here of me;" yes, indeed! On Wednesday night a full house, notwithstanding most terrific snow from morning till night; a white chaos. It was indeed a compliment. I shall be here nearly three weeks more.

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Boston, Jan. 7th, 1823.

I am going on greatly; and have still the happiness of reporting to you my excellent health in this, I may call it, most terrific climate; the thermometer this morning was two degrees below zero. I have heard a black preacher, who was rather amusing. The pranks that are played in the "nigger meetings," as they are called, are beyond belief—yelling, screeching, and groaning, resembling a fox-chase much more than a place of worship.

To-day nineteen dollars were paid for a box! for the first night of my "Trip to Paris," to-morrow; and so on, 14—12—10, according to the situation; and the overplus is given to a theatrical fund. So that I shall do some good here at any rate. Notwithstanding all this, the theatre is small compared to New York, and I feel I am right in taking a certainty.

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. ROLLS.

Boston, Massachusetts,—New England,—
United States,—America:

MY DEAR FRIENDS, Jan. 4th, 1823.

Though all your efforts, and all the recollections of your former kindness, could not squeeze one line out of me in Europe, I write from the New World in full and fervent hopes of mercy, of forgiveness of past injuries, and that when I confess my sins to you, I shall not plead for pardon in vain. I suppose you have heard from my wife of the untimely fate of the only letter I have written

to you for a long period. It was a good one — it was *indeed!* and very long too. I cannot write such another now. I was then surrounded by those I love; I can't quite say that now. I wrote that said letter to make my peace with you before I left the old world; and by some accidental fit of absence, though I wrote it for the purpose of my son taking it with him from Liverpool to forward to you, I locked it up in my desk and took it to sea; nor did I discover the mistake until a week after I sailed. A vessel hove in sight. "A Frenchman!" said our captain. He hailed us: —

"Whither bound?"—"*Havre de Grace.*"

"What is the name of your *sheep?*"—"*William Thompson!*"

"What is the capetaine's name?"—"*William Thompson!*"

"What is the owner's name?"—"*William Thompson!*"

"Have you some lady on board?"—"*Yes.*"

"What is *her* her name?"—"*Mrs. Thompson!*"

"Diable!" was roared through the trumpet, to the great amusement of our crew. He then consented to come near enough to us for the letter to be thrown on board which I had written to *you*. A weight was attached to it; but alas! the marksman failed. The mate undertook to throw it clean into the French vessel; but it fell short a yard or two, and my long, laborious, *clever*, and *very* entertaining letter met a watery grave!

I arrived at New York after a very pleasant passage of thirty-five days, on the 5th of September. I presume you have heard from my wife of the unfortunate circumstances under which I landed. I have seen accounts in the English papers of the yellow fever in America, and of course they have reached you in Paris. I will flatter my-

self, though I am not entitled to your thoughts, that you felt for my situation. Nothing could be more appalling than the intelligence as first communicated to me by two fishermen, about a hundred miles from New York. "What news?"—"Yellow fever at New York, I guess."—"Fatal?"—"I reckon it is."—"Many deaths?"—"One hundred and forty every twenty-four hours, I suppose."—"Have the inhabitants remained?"—"Fifty thousand, or somewheres thereaways, have quit right away."—The number of deaths was an exaggeration; but we found quite enough of the intelligence true to induce me to give up all thoughts of going on shore in the city.

As we approached the harbour, the desolating effects of the pestilence were too apparent to render the fisherman's tale doubtful. The quays of the city are very commodious; and, as I have since seen them, greatly calculated to impress a stranger with notions of wealth, extended commerce, bustle, and activity. Imagine the effect of a sabbath-like silence in such a situation to those who could contrast its present quiet with its former life. Imagine (though we have no quays to allow the comparison), but, suppose from the Thames, or one of the bridges, that you could look at the banks of the river, and into the streets, thence to the Strand, and that no one inhabitant was to be seen between Westminster and Blackfriars; you may then form some notion of the melancholy scene that presented itself to my eyes, with all its distressing associations. Pompeii could not be more awfully still; for one quarter of the city was, by general command, depopulated. This was called the infected district. "I fled for safety and for succour" to Baltimore, where I made my début about three weeks after my arrival. This was commencing operations at Doncaster, instead of making the impression

in London. I spent nearly ten days before I discovered that the fever raged there also, and more fatally; but it was cautiously concealed from strangers, and passed under another name—the fatal visiter had an *alias*. I will not attempt to enter into the causes of this disgusting fact, but be assured of its truth. While the magistracy and Board of Health of New York proclaimed the ravages of the disease, and warned strangers from approaching their shores, the Baltimorians received strangers with open arms, and proclaimed that their city was healthy! Nay, the press of the two cities entered into a kind of party controversy, and twitted each other with the pestilence, as if it were a political error, for which the government ought to be rendered accountable. Notwithstanding this calamity, I opened to a great house. The second and third were equally good; but they fell off. How is this? At length, pride and good feeling towards me (added to my reading in a Baltimore paper weekly report of deaths —"Palsy, 1; ague, 4; bilious malignant fever, 46;") brought farther truth. I was congratulated on my 1000 dollar benefit. Prodigious! under all circumstances,—coming at such a time. "How?"—"Why, sir, our epidemic."—"Oh, oh! I begin to perceive. But why don't you call it by its proper name?" Mark one answer —"Ah, the New York people can afford to lose their trade for one year. Baltimore has suffered too much; we can't afford to drive away merchants and strangers at this time of the year." I leave your imagination to fill up the rest of the canvass; you can fully understand what were my sensations when I discovered the dreadful truth.

My success at New York was triumphant; during sixteen nights great houses; from 1200 to 1800 dollars nightly;

a most joyous audience; and the attentions paid me in private have been equally flattering. The upper orders of society are very pleasing, and infinitely more polished than it is the fashion to believe in Europe. They have less fun than the grave English; not a very quick perception of humour, and are apparently dead to the fascinations of punning. Their gravity almost amounts to melancholy; and therefore it is hopeless to expect sport in fishing for character. I have thrown many lines into their calm unruffled streams, and have not been negligent in attending to the nicety of my baits, but I have not caught anything. I should have been delighted at a bite, but I have not even been solaced by a nibble. However, I have not thrown away my hooks in despair; my rods are not yet laid by for the season.

As to the lower orders, I know not where they are to be found. I know no bait that will tempt them from their lurking-places. The servants, waiters, porters, &c. are nearly all "niggars;" the hackney-coachmen nearly all Irish or Scotch. There are apparently no poor — certainly no beggars. The American is too proud and independent to accept a menial situation. He will not be called servant, nor allow that he has a master. As to liberty and independence, "rare words," I am convinced that it is only productive of one very apparent effect, which is, to render the rich and educated, slaves to their inferiors; at least, to their absurd notions. I dare say you have, amongst others of my friends, wondered why I should go to America. It was an irresistible impulse. If I am to believe a clergyman of the Dutch Reformed Church, who has been preaching at me because I perform to fuller houses than he does, I could not possibly avoid it, as I was sent here for a special purpose. This gentleman under-

takes to point out the causes of the late calamity, and pretends to have discovered the sins that have excited the vengeance of the Great Creator. I have been here about a fortnight, and shall remain three weeks longer; then to New York, and thence to Philadelphia. If you should be inclined to treat a poor fellow with a letter, which will be doubly dear to him from its journeying three thousand miles, why so—it will be well received. How difficult it is to fancy the situation of those who are dear to us, at such a distance! Well, well! I must hope and hope, and look forward to that delicious moment when I may pop upon you all once more. I see you all now, I do. Oh, how I should like to open a door slily this afternoon, and say, "Ah!" to those dear little roarers that were wont to be such an audience at Briton Ferry! God bless them all! and you, my dear Mr. and Mrs. Rolls, and Mrs. Barnet, and Miss Sherrat. Remember me kindly to everybody; and be assured, that though I have been silent, you have always been present to my sweetest recollections, and that I am, and always shall be, most gratefully and sincerely yours,

C. MATHEWS.

Thermometer two degrees below zero.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Boston, Jan. 12th, 1823,
alias Frozen Regions.

If you can hold a pen, dare to go from one room to another, or to open your mouth without the fear of your words being frozen up—if you can exert any of your energies, then pity me as I envy you in such a case. This is the most trying climate that I ever ima-

gined. In short, all you have read of Russia will apply to it. The water jug, from which I had taken water to wash my hands at four o'clock, was frozen at seven so hard, that I could not break it. I bear it as well as can be expected; that is to say, I have not had the slightest symptom of cold. I have gone through my work with health and strength; but I cannot go out, for I am afraid to walk, and have no desire to try their sleighing—for *sleighing* and *killing* are synonymous terms with me. I have once or twice experienced the sensation in their hacks here, which are taken off their wheels and placed upon runners, as they call them, for not one pair of wheels is to be seen in the town. Indeed they could not possibly get through the accumulation of snow. These people are all happy, and as merry as Americans can affect to be,—that vexes me, who can only make myself happy by anticipating a thaw, and death to their mad frolics in their sleighs. They whisk along at about the rate of twelve miles an hour, and in *open* carriages like the half of a boat. So fond are they of the sport, that it is common for parties to go out at night ten or fifteen miles to adjacent villages, dance there, and then return in these open sleighs. Funny people! they declare it is right *arnest* fun. I believe it is all they enjoy; so rest them merry!

The society here (the upper ranks—I have literally had no intercourse with any other) is quite delightful. Washington Irving's letters here afforded two or three delightful days. At two houses in particular, I will boldly say, that in no part of the world where I have travelled, have I seen "the thing done in better style," as they say in England, as to dinners, servants, furniture, literary conversation, &c. It is impossible, however prejudiced a man may be, to leave one of the houses of the first people here, or at New York, and make such remarks as —— did. A man might with

equal justice speak of Irish manners generally from the specimens of it among Dublin shopkeepers. Talking of Irish manners puts me in mind of English Manners. He is Consul here, and as I met him wherever I went in old times, of course we have plenty to say to each other. He has a very pleasant family, and is a great solace to me during this miserable weather.

The "Trip to Paris" made an immense hit here, and places for the second night of it, to-morrow, were sold by auction yesterday at from 12 to 17 dollars for the first choice. This is the place where Kean lost himself. He had first complimented them in a speech, and called the city the literary emporium of the New World, and afterwards got drunk, and would not play to a thin house. I have beat Kean here in receipts.

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Boston, Jan. 20th, 1823.

I shall complete my engagement, having renewed for four nights, on Wednesday next; which will make sixteen nights at 50*l.* a night, or 800*l.* I never had such a compliment paid me as in this place. Two or three of the nights would have ruined any other theatrical speculation either in America or elsewhere,—the tremendous falls of snow and sheet ice almost rendering it impossible to walk. Yet on some of these nights people came from Salem in open sleighs (16 miles)! and we have not had one indifferent house. It is very common to close the theatre at New York in the months of January and February; this I have found out since I arrived. I therefore don't play there under a certainty now. I act six nights before I go to Philadelphia, at 50*l.* a night. There I have most

delightful quarters. A little scrap has just been put into my hands, from a newspaper, in which I am introduced. It is in a letter written by one of the professors of Cambridge College here, on the subject of a mermaid. A dragon had been exhibited here, which, with your mermaid, he puts down as impositions; but concludes the article thus:—

I know but one natural production from abroad that can maintain its standing, and which can be viewed, examined, and reviewed again and again with increased satisfaction and wonder, and that is *Mathews*. He is so far out of the common course of ordinary creatures, that he is absolutely and literally-speaking a *Lusus Naturæ*, or test of Nature.

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Boston, Jan. 29th, 1823.

Here I am still at Boston. This is my last night. I wish you could see me play *Monsieur Tonson;* it is certainly the very best thing I ever did. It is such a favourite here, that I am pressed to take it for my benefit. In this place so many persons will not go to a theatre, who still wish to see me, that I am invited to give a night in a concert hall, which I am told will be greatly attended. No clergyman dare go to a theatre here, but they will patronize me in a room; and so, in compliance with this request, on Friday night I operate. You make me envy you, when you describe the beautiful weather you have. The severity of the frost here is beyond anything a European can fancy.

When our Thames is frozen over, the event is commemorated by fairs, and bills printed on the surface of the ice; here, the rivers, five or six times as broad as the Thames,

are always frozen in the winter, and navigation is entirely suspended. I have borne the climate wonderfully; and am the amazement of the natives, who are all enveloped in warm wrappings of every description. I am more confirmed than ever in my objection to that system.

By the Packet of the 8th of February, I shall send money to Stephenson. My first note to Arnold is due in March; it is for 1200*l.* I shall send from that sum to 2000*l.* according to the state of the money market when I get to New York,—this I promised him should be arranged with you. It is a melancholy reflection that I shall probably not hear a remark from you on this subject until nearly May; but I must endure it. I am in the best of health, thank God!

Charles Lamb's account of my gallery has been copied into an English newspaper here, called the Albion; and so has the scrap you sent me, calling me such funny names—"Co" "Kaleidoscope," &c.

My time here has been spent in such uniformity, that you must excuse the dullness of my epistles. Rehearsals with pumps—all morning—three nights playing—dining out, &c. My own "At Home" has hit much harder here than at New York, and is preferred to the acting; there it was *vice versâ*. The localities are the chief drawbacks, as you may suppose. My own "Youthful Days" is the chief favourite; and the Volunteer Song produces effect, for it is said to be the exact representation of a similar scene here — where there are no *regulars*. I can gather from that how joyous they would be if the scenes were all equally familiar to them. Remember me to everybody.

C. MATHEWS.

The scrap alluded to in the foregoing letter,

calling him "such funny names," &c. was taken from a work called "Theatrical Portraits," &c. by Harry Sloe Van Dyk. The lines are eccentric, and very expressive as—

"A PORTRAIT OF MATHEWS.

"What shall we call thee, thou amusing elf,
Who hast a host of beings in thyself?
Who canst variety in all infuse,
And changest like the expiring dolphin's hues,
Or skies in April? Say, what term would be
Appropriate, thou world's epitome?
Thou ambulating rainbow! Fitful hope!
Thou earthly moon! Thou live kaleidoscope!
Thou twenty voices! Antidote to woe!
Thou one plurality! Thou single Co.!"*

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* During this year was also published, in Oxford, what I have been told is an ingenious parody on some of the Sapphics of Horace, headed—

"MATHEWS COMICI LAUDES.

Prime mimorum! thou rare mimic Mathews!
Quem jocus circum volat, blithe as Mayday,
Te canant gownsmen, giddy and grave too,
All over Oxford.
Tu potes proctors comitesque bull dogs
Ducere, et redcoats celeres morari;
E'en the stern masters tibi blandienti
Smilingly cedunt.
Quin et each high don sociique vultu
Titter invito 'mid the gay assemblage;
Shouts of applause rise rapid, dum catervas
Carmine mulces.

Tu,

Tu, merry fellow, velut es levamen
To the pale forms whose final doom approaches;
Who, cito coram solio Minervæ
Shuddering will stand.
Fell are *her* Priests! Quum *Vitulos* prehendant
Singulos eheu! lacerant in pieces!
Hi tamen mites *sweetly* gaze at Mathews
Full of his frolics.
Serus in *Lunnum* redeas, diuque
Gratus intersis populo togato!
Leave the dull Cockneys,—with us to be *At Home*, sir!
Go it in Oxford!"

CHAPTER XVI.

Interview at Boston between Mr. Mathews and an old Friend of his Father.—Letter from that Gentleman to Mr. Mathews. —Letters to Mrs. Mathews; Travelling in the United States; Anecdote; Recovery of the lost Brooch; Intense Cold; Dialogue between Mr. Price and Mr. Mathews; Action for Libel against an Editor at Boston. — Portrait of Kemble in *Cato*.—Lord Blessington.—Sir Thomas Lawrence; an agreeable Surprise.

WHILE my husband was at Boston, an old friend of his father introduced himself to him. He was a dissenting minister, and one of those who enforced their opinions by the mildness and liberality of their language and manner. Such a one, with all my husband's early distaste of the *unwashed* part of the community, he received with more than common respect and attention; and a very long and interesting interview took place. A few days after, Mr. Mathews being on the eve of his departure for New York, the following interesting and amiable letter was delivered to him from Mr. Sabine, the clergyman alluded to, and much I regret that I do not possess a copy of the answer to it:—

TO C. MATHEWS, ESQ.

Boston, N. E., Elliot Street,
Feb. 1st, 1823.

MY DEAR SIR,

The half-hour's conversation with which you favoured me the other day, has brought so many "things of other days" to my mind, that I cannot persuade myself to dismiss you and them without tendering again my best wishes for your happiness and prosperity. I have taken the liberty also to send you a sermon, preached by me, on the last State thanksgiving-day. I have so done for two reasons: first, you will receive it on Sunday,—perhaps you will be grave enough to give a sermon a reading on such a day, especially as it is one sent you by a countryman; and then, there is something in it directly on the subject to which we alluded when we conversed on the New England character. In this particular, New England people and English Dissenters are much alike.

The theatre has never received, and perhaps will never receive much support from them. The views and feelings of your good old father (now in a happier world), are too well known to you to render it necessary for me to add another word on that head. The patronage, however, which you have enjoyed in this grave city, must prove to you that there are many so far weaned from the prejudices and habits of the old folks, as to relish the wit and mirth of the English stage. Yet, still I am under a persuasion, that a more moral and sober age is too fast advancing upon us to admit of theatrical success in this region. I should not wonder if Boston Theatre, before the lapse of seven years, were in the hands of the religious community, and converted into a church. Would it fill you with any regret should you hear, a few years hence, when mellowing into age, that your countryman was

calling them to repentance and to tears, on that very spot on which you in younger days made so many laugh, and forget almost that they were immortal? And how delighted should I be to hear that you had withdrawn so much wit and talent from the focus of public amusement,—for your quota I am sure you have amply rendered,—and directed them, even at your term of life, to a more moral purpose. I am not, my dear sir, dealing out censure, I am rather as a Christian asking the residue of your powers to be engaged in a service which will repay you, and the world too, a thousand-fold beyond all that has been rendered hitherto in the former course. A man of your turn cannot fall back upon himself, and feast on private life; you must, to old age, be a public man. I would that that taste for public benefit should at length be consecrated to religion and the immortal interests of men. Will you not be persuaded again to visit the Holy Land, and review the records of apostolic acts, to allow yourself to be charmed with the astonishing effects produced by the powers of a single disciple of our Saviour, who at one exhibition of his talents (endued with power from on high, it is true) captivated three thousand, and made them his stated attendants, which Mr. Mathews has never yet done, but much like which he may do, if he can address by the same rule and speak the same thing.

When I began this scrawl I had not measured out this drift, but, as it has gone so you will take it, as coming out of the right place, a *good and honest heart.* What I intended to have said was this: — If you should be disposed to hear a sermon, and should be able to reach Boylston Hall in the *afternoon,* you may hear a preacher somewhat after the fashion of your good old-fashioned father, whose memory I revere, and whom I should gladly serve in the person of his son. May a gracious Pro-

vidence preserve you from all evil, and in due time restore you to your country and to your family, and add to you every other blessing for both worlds! prays, my dear sir,

Yours respectfully and affectionately,

JAMES SABINE.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

New York, Feb. 7th, 1823.

Here I am once more in New York, at my old quarters, comfortably lodged. I left Boston on Sunday, and arrived here yesterday, two hundred and forty miles. Thermometer eight degrees below zero! Most fortunately, a gentleman (really a gentleman), and his wife,* a colonel, and naval officer, had hired a coach to themselves. I was invited to join the party. *Chartering a stage-coach* here is the only imitation the Americans have of posting. It means merely, that you keep out all passengers by paying for the whole coach, and stop when and where you like. No language can convey to you the horrors of travelling in this country. Though their winters are like Siberia, because their summers are like the East Indies, they only provide themselves against heat. I don't believe there is a carriage in the country covered all over so as to keep out the air. All descriptions of carriages are open in summer, and they have only temporary covering for winter. No panels like ours. It is impossible, therefore, to be warm. The houses, generally speaking, are of the same description. I slept in a bed on the road without even posts for curtains,—a regular hospital-bed; but not so good as those in St. George's

* Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Eliot of Boston.—A. M.

Hospital. There was no fire-place in the room. When I arose in the morning I was obliged to call one of our party to button my waistcoat, my fingers were completely frost-bitten. With all this the atmosphere is delightfully cheering; an Italian sky, and days without even a cloud. You know how valuable this is to me, and when I can be in action I bear the climate well. The wretched English who have been lured here, and have not the means of getting back, are pictures of misery and despair. The second and third year is sure to make inroads on their constitution. They all bear the first summer and winter well. I am much delighted to find Elliston has been so attentive to you.

I inclose you a bill for 2000*l.* sterling, which I wish to be sent to Rowland Stephenson the moment you receive it. I wrote you by the 1st February packet to apprise you of the note to Arnold for 1200*l.* being due in March.* It is to be taken out of the sum inclosed. I send this directed to Mr. Freeling; and, by the time I get your acknowledgment of it, I shall be thinking of moving towards Europe. God bless you and my dear boy.

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Philadelphia, Feb. 17th, 1823.

You must not feel yourself neglected, hurt, or jealous of my long communication to Smith, if this letter is short or dull, for it is only two days since I sent you off a large packet. I have made a great hit here, and my anxieties

* It will be remembered that Mr. Mathews had engaged to pay Mr. Arnold 2000*l.* besides an additional season, for his permission to visit America.—A. M.

are all over. This is the last large city in which I shall *act*, and therefore I have no fidget left about first appearances. It was very lucky for me that Price lent me "Monsieur Tonson" to read during our passage. It has been a great hit for me in the drama; and the drama has been my main stay. Anything like a tour with my own entertainment would have been *impossible*. I want a word stronger than that to express it. There are many reasons for this, but the first, like Apollo Belvi's, is enough. There is no regular conveyance for luggage, and the proprietors of coaches will not be answerable for the loss of any article whatever. There are no stage-waggons, and almost all traffic is carried on by steam-boats; and in the winter months their rivers are entirely frozen up, so as to prevent navigation. In every place I have visited disappointment has been experienced, which but for the drama would have been fatal. At Baltimore my "Polly Packet" scene was a week after the time. At Boston the people were dismissed after assembling about the doors, for neither I nor my baggage had come, and I went by water with them to make all sure. We were too late. I shipped off all the machinery and dresses belonging to my own work, to go round by sea (the only way) on the 1st of February, to New York,—played there on 7th,—not arrived! In each night's bill the "Packet Diligence; a Christmas at Brighton," advertised for the next. The drama was perforce substituted, and I was compelled to study *Nicol Jarvie*, in which I made a hit. When I left, they had not arrived, and we have only just heard of their safety. Now, they must be shipped to this place, so that a month has elapsed since their departure. Had I determined not to act, this would have been ruin. There is no help for it, but I luckily have not suffered. It was curi-

ous that a few days only before the arrival of your bit of scarlet silk, I *had* purchased a crape dress of nearly that colour, one of the most beautiful things I ever saw, and that I am sure you will like for a winter dress, one of white, and one of a pearl quakerish colour, quite to your taste; and also two scarfs, I think they are called. I will consult Mrs. Price about the shawls. Carved combs are scarce in Philadelphia, but I will attend to this commission in New York.

I must give you a little anecdote, in general circulation here, which is rather amusing, more as a picture for the fancy to realize than a story of point. It is told as an instance of my "wonderful powers." There is a physician here of the name of Chapman, to whom I had a letter from Washington Irving. I saw him in September last, and had him instantly, and indulged in imitating him. When I went through in October, I gave this imitation at a party here; for like P——s at Liverpool, everybody knew him, and it was equally droll. A gentleman present not only laughed then, but when he went home he laughed again at the recollection so immoderately, that his wife really thought he had an hysteric fit. In perfect alarm, she sent the servant off for their physician. He was from home; and the servant thinking his master dying, did not stop till he found a doctor. Just as the patient was recovering from the effects of the counterfeit doctor, in came the real Dr. Chapman; and when the patient heard the sound of his voice, he was off again, and was actually very near being bled while in his second fit. —A fact!

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

New York, Feb. 15th, 1823.

I am delighted to hear of the attentions you receive. Your last but one, dated December 28th, made me uneasy, as I perceived throughout symptoms of an unquiet mind; and you dwelt much upon the ——— and ———. I do not think there is any deceit about such people. Why do you look for sincerity? You never liked either of these persons, and surely you must suppose they have found it out before now. The world, generally speaking, is made up of such acquaintances as these, and I cannot think they are peculiar to me. Your reflection upon what Dr. Hooper said is somewhat more serious; and I think his observations were, at all events, useless. The time to give you such a caution would be when I am projecting another tour. I am certain you feel too much confidence in my affection to allow it to be shaken by dreams. Distance only tends to rivet that genuine love that I have always cherished for you. I never really loved any other woman; and your image is as dear to me as it is constantly before me, waking or sleeping. The most ardent and enthusiastic lover could not be more sincere in his devotion to his "mistress's eyebrow" than I am to thine, when I gaze on it nightly and implore God to bless you! I only *live* at this distance by the perspective view of my happiness in dwelling again with you; and the prospect of a day arriving, when there cannot be a necessity for even a temporary separation. In the present instance, your duty to our dear boy was paramount. Your conscience dictated to you the path to take in your "divided duty;" and you did for the best. You present to me my child improved by your guardianship; and place firm reliance on finding your husband with his affec-

tion for you unshaken by any other attraction, and rather confirmed than diminished by absence. By the by, I must relate to you a circumstance that occurred with respect to the eye on which I so often dwell. I had called on a gentleman in Philadelphia, who had said "Your brooch is loose;" and I had replaced it with safety. I walked from his house to a distance of half a mile or more, to the house of another friend, to whom I had a letter. No sooner had I entered, than, on looking in the glass to put my hair in trim, I missed the brooch. My behaviour during my short stay was (apparently, I dare say) so absurd that my company was not desirable. Such agitation about a trifle, I have no doubt, excited their laughter. To me the loss of that eye which conveys to me the image of "her I love," was irreparable. It was a serious calamity, and would have destroyed my peace and comfort. I left the house in a state of alarm and agitation, feeling that if I did not again find the lost article, I should be superstitious, and believe some misfortune had befallen you. I walked slowly; luckily it was not in a much frequented part of the city, and in a part unpaved. I retraced my steps, and looked, and looked, but without hope! At last, I remembered a particular part of a street where I had crossed, from a curious bill on a lamp-post, which was headed, "Twenty Dollars Reward!" I returned; and close by the post lay the darling object of my search, after it had been lost at least twenty minutes. You may fancy my self-congratulations on my good fortune.

I give Arnold great credit for his "ideas," which nobody else could have thought of,—"keeping a journal, and dwelling upon such characters as I may think likely to be effective," is an admirable thought. What a pity I had not done it before,—perhaps the "Youthful Days" might have been effective, and the "Scotchwoman" popu-

lar. The "opinion" that it should be my own real adventures is a most ingenious and admirable thought. Seriously though, everything Smith suggests, to the minutest atom, has occurred to me; and the "Diligence" plan appears to me the only chance I have of character or fun. You might as well look for either in a Quaker's meeting, as among the people here. Yet materials I can find. As to Congress, the only condition I have is to go four hundred miles through the snow. They close on the third of March; and all the orators of the globe would not induce me to go so far at this time of the year. Eighty miles I must go, to Philadelphia, next Wednesday; but no further till the winter disappears. You seem to have had a touch in England, though you don't mention it in your December letter; but "I see by the papers" there had been lots of skating and drowning in the Parks, before the latter end of that month.

Remember me most kindly to my very dear old friend, Sir John Carr, and say how much flattered I am by his kind recollections. His letter to you, I find, shows I am to blame in living out of town. The "Siberia Paradise," is a hint. What would he do in this country? * Tell him from me to comfort himself by comparison; one week here would make him long for his Asiatic, Gothic, or Salamander retreat. On the road from Boston here I slept at an inn; when I arose my fingers and nose were completely frost-bitten. I applied the former to the latter. Each was insensible to the touch of the other. Never did I witness such a want of feeling in members of the same family.

We must now be satisfied; it is in vain to lament. The fever—the fever was ruin to my hopes! I am well. Had I got the money before the contagion broke out, you

* Sir John Carr had a great dread of *cold*.—A. M.

might have received the assets without poor me; now I hope you will get *me* safe, and not *without* money. But the *vanity* of the English actors has overrated the means of this country as to theatricals. New York is the only great town, and at this season of the year it is common to close it for two months; for the people can't get to the play. The actors from England, who are *regularly* engaged, are told that their engagement is subject to that deduction, if a severe winter, and that at all events they only get half salaries during January and February. Neither Phillips nor Bartley ever told me this.

The following pithy dialogue took place between Price and myself, which will let you into my future plans:—"Well, sir, what think you of Boston?"—"Why, the success was most unprecedented; that is, they did all they could; they made seventeen good houses for Boston. But what is it? They stare with wonder at a succession of houses averaging 750 dollars. This does not, with their shameful charge, give me 50*l.* per night."—"But I do!"—"True; but you lose by me."—"That's my business."—"Are you willing to do so, still?" "To take my chance, I am."—"Well, it comes to this, if I am not insured 50*l.* sterling, I'll go back, I'll go back directly."—"Then I will bind myself to give it you for as many nights as you can act."—"Done!" And it is done; and well for me, be assured. He then proposed four nights here in my way to Philadelphia. I opened to 800 dollars. "Great! immense! O, sir, we have not seen such a house since you left us!" That would not give me 50*l.* nor anything like it. The second, 700; last night, not 400,—a fall of deep snow, from morning till night, and the wind enough to blow the carriages over. Had I not been here, the theatre would have been closed!

Your advice about Mr. Freeling * comes rather late. I have occasionally acted upon it, and shall do so now invariably. He is a real good fellow; and I have told him what I think of him. An encomium of his upon me, to a gentleman here, that he never expected to meet my eye, by accident got into print. An extract from his letter was published by an editor to whom I brought a letter from Washington Irving. He heard it read, it seems, and, with a good intention, betrayed a private communication. No person suffered by it; but it was not *correct.*

I have already, I believe, explained to you the *necessity* of my acting. I owe much to *Goldfinch,*—everything to *Tonson,* which has been my sheet-anchor. But the legitimate drama is in this city my main stay. I have studied the *Baillie Jarvie;* and I am sure that the London people never saw me act. Their want of encouragement paralysed my powers. It was a treat to me to be allowed to exhibit myself as I wish. Here they say it was the *Baillie* of the Novelist. I felt that it was; and I am more pleased than they imagine.

Your advice came, like other hints, rather behind time. As to not being persuaded into opening in *Goldfinch,* if I had not, my occupation would have been gone. All is for the best. Price is an excellent judge. I have avoided the "Table-talk" as a pestilence this trip. I should have been frozen,—in a twofold way.

The papers may inform you that I have brought an action against an editor at Boston for a libel. I came out of the charges with glory, leaving my calumniator with the character of a poltroon as well as a liar. I have left him *à*

* The late Sir Francis Freeling, a gentleman beloved by all who had the happiness of knowing him.—A. M.

la Ford; * but to pay more, I have no doubt. God preserve thee, my dearest wife; love to dear Charley. Yours unalterably, and with the sincerest affection,

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

New York, Feb. 20th, 1823.

I have the pleasure of announcing another arrival, which supplies Journal from November 29th to December 4th, by Amity. The Manhattan, which is in the river, will, I expect, complete my missing pages, though it is not quite so interesting to hear what happened in November some days after the arrival of intelligence of Christmas festivities.

The ——— and ——— are, as they should be, uppermost in your thoughts, and excite pleasing sensations in me. I wish ——— could be banished from your recollections. You have before twitted me with the picture. I am disposed to enter into your feelings as far as regards the *man*. I grant I have been deceived. I am perfectly willing to cede to you that you have a quicker perception of the mind, principles, and plans of such a person; but greater minds than mine have been imposed upon. It would puzzle the ingenuity of yourself, and others who have been imposed upon, to persuade the "Great Unknown" that the god is a drunkard. I willingly admit my credulity; but I cannot repent what has been done by all collectors. The arts would be checked, artists would

* This is an allusion to an action, in 1817, brought by a Mr. Ford for defamation, when the plaintiff was awarded 1*s.* damages.—A. M.

be pinched, and much mischief might arise from a sullen determination in a collector of portraits or historical works of art, if the originals were refused to engravers to exercise their skill upon. I certainly never dreamed of making money by engraving from any original in my gallery; therefore I am not injured. It is done every day. Lord Blessington has allowed the most valuable theatrical portrait I know to be removed at great risk for such a purpose. I did not think of any consequences; and if I have erred, I still think it was on the right side. I do not think you would have refused such an application from any one but ———, or some person that you think ill of. You have qualified your scolding by an affectionate and kind termination; and do not suppose that you have excited any other feeling than grief that you should allow your mind to be irritated by the littleness or bad qualities of persons who have done nothing to deserve your love.

I am on the wing to-morrow for Philadelphia. Price goes with me eighty-six miles in a sleigh. The country is too much glazed to admit of wheels; so we skate all the way, for the carriages run on immense skates. We are well provided with buffalo-skins, moccasins, and other Wowski and Yarico coverings unknown in our milder regions. Tell Sir John I am writing in a tub of hot water, with two black servants attending, each in a vapour bath, with their arms extended through flannel apertures, wiping my nose with hot flannels, to prevent the breath freezing. By the time you receive this, a young summer (for there is no spring here), will compel me to abandon my cloth-coat and pantaloons. Still I am right well, and in high success.

A rascally libeller at Boston, who lives, like *Snake*, only

by the infamy of his character, has, as I told you in my last, chosen to assert that my entertainments are full of obscenity, and have been scouted from the stage. For this I have, after calling him a black-hearted monster, liar, and libeller, before his face and three hundred others, and pledging myself to chastise him personally if he would wait the conclusion of the performance (which he declined), brought an action against him. I am resolved to pursue it. It has been the means of elevating me higher than I stood before.

C. MATHEWS.

The allusion to a picture, in the foregoing letter, lent to be engraved, and Mr. Mathews's liberal remarks upon the facility that ought to be afforded to the arts by private collectors, induces me to explain his observation about Lord Blessington.

Sir Thomas Lawrence's magnificent portrait of Kemble in Cato, was painted for the Earl of Blessington; and after it had been exhibited at Somerset House, it was hung up in St. James's Square, where, whenever my husband's eye rested upon it, Lord Blessington smiled, and made some good-humoured observation upon his evident admiration and longing for it. One day his lordship remarked: — "If that picture, Mathews, represented any actor but my old friend Kemble, you should have it; but I think I can do better than give you so large a painting as that, which would occupy too much room in your gallery. I will make you a present of a reduced copy of

it, and you shall choose your own artist for the purpose, and I will pay him a hundred guineas for his labour.

This kind and liberal intention was to be put in execution at the end of a term. Sir Thomas Lawrence had been already granted permission to engrave it, and it was this circumstance that Mr. Mathews alluded to, when he spoke of Lord Blessington allowing the most valuable theatrical portrait he knew of to be removed, &c. When my husband returned from America, and for a long time afterwards, he evinced great anxiety for his copy; but Sir Thomas Lawrence still retained the original. He was apprised by Lord Blessington of his promise (though not of the pecuniary part of it) to Mr. Mathews. He was urged, however, in vain: and it seemed as if he never again intended to part with the picture. Mr. Mathews was dissatisfied, indeed angry; and something like a coolness seemed to ensue. Sir Thomas, indeed, was as polite as ever to him, and as kind in his manner; but this did not atone for his apparent want of feeling for my husband's hobby. At last, Mr. Mathews gave up all hope, though not all thought, of the coveted *Cato*. One day, Sir Thomas, meeting my husband at their club, said to him, "Do me the favour of calling upon me the first leisure morning you have. I want to explain and apologise to you for so long preventing your getting a copy of

my Cato. I am now in haste. When will you give me a quarter of an hour?" My husband was too ready to hear any explanation that might possibly lead to the accomplishment of his wishes, and agreed to call in Russell Square the next day. When he arrived, he found Sir Thomas in his painting-room, who thus addressed him:—"My dear Mathews, I will not ask your opinion of my delay in resigning the picture. *I know* you must have been very angry with me; and now I will throw myself upon your generosity, by owning the truth, which, indeed, I can no longer withhold, or wish to keep secret. From the moment I heard of your desire to have a copy from this picture, I retained it for the sole purpose of preventing your intention; and I will thank you not to ask me why, until I am able to explain my reasons." Mr. Mathews being about to reply to this (as he thought) improper confession, Sir Thomas hurriedly added, "And now let me show you my last work." He then drew forward a picture, and exhibited to the delighted eyes of his visitor a beautiful *Cato* of smaller size, but a *fac-simile* of Lord Blessington's. "My *dear Mathews*, will you now forgive me? Here is my *reason* for keeping the large picture so long. I desired long ago to make you a present of a painting for your collection; and the moment I heard of your admiration and desire to possess a copy of *the Cato*, a portrait of our mutual friend, John

Kemble, I determined that I would make it for you myself. Want of leisure for some time delayed the execution of my wishes; but at last, I have completed the task, all but a few touches; and I am happy in thinking that I have gratified you." Thus was Sir Thomas's "illiberal" conduct explained; and, once more, had my husband occasion to observe upon the impropriety of guessing and judging of motives, without *evidence.* Soon after this, Sir Thomas again dined with us; and I believe felt that he had been "*cruel* to be kind" to my husband in keeping his intentions so long a mystery, from the wish to give him an agreeable surprise; and taking a friend of ours with him back to town, he told him he meant to paint a portrait of me as another present to Mr. Mathews, if I would sit immediately for it. I need not say that this offer was accepted with delight by my husband. By an appointment we called upon him a few days after, to make the arrangement; but *Sir Thomas was ill.* Alas! our next inquiry was answered by closed windows — *this great man was dead!*

The picture of Cato was, after some reasonable demur, delivered to Mr. Mathews without purchase by Sir Thomas's executors, on his word of honour that it was painted for him by the illustrious artist as a present. This picture is in the collection of the Garrick Club.

CHAPTER XVII.

Letter from Mr. Mathews to Mr. James Smith; the American Character; Inordinate Love of Petty Titles; Yankee Conversation; Independent Landlords; Conversation with an American Boniface; a Black Methodist; Negro Songs.—Letters to Mrs. Mathews; Fever at Baltimore.—Account of Mr. Mathews's Performance at Philadelphia.—Letters to Mrs. Mathews; Joseph Bonaparte; Terrific Storm; American Atmosphere; a Curer of Lameness; the Hudson River; a Waterfall; Anecdote; Preparations for Return to England.

THE following letter to his friend, Mr. James Smith, gives a lively view of what my husband had observed in his American tour:—

TO JAMES SMITH, ESQ.

MY DEAR SMITH, Philadelphia, Feb. 23rd, 1823.

I imagine by this time you begin to be a little impatient, and perhaps anxious to hear from me, though I must suppose you have made every allowance for my apparent neglect. You have doubtless heard of the calamitous circumstances under which I landed in this country, and you will readily believe that it was a most unpropitious time to extract anything like fun or humour from the natives, even had they possessed as much as the Irish. America was, at the time of my arrival, a huge

hospital, and conversation a mere medical report. My "commercial speculations" have been completely deranged, and though not destroyed, very materially injured. It was not till the frost set in, that I could discover even a smile on any of the naturally saturnine grave visages of the natives. You may suppose that I was not much disposed to mirth myself, or to draw it from others, during such a visitation. This has naturally tended to delay me in those observations which I should otherwise have immediately commenced, on the habits and peculiarities of the Americans. At the same time it is my belief, that had I arrived after a successful war, and during rejoicings for peace, instead of days of mourning and sickness, I should not have discovered much more of merriment of character, humour, or any one ingredient of which I was in search, and which is now, in fact, the chief motive of my longer stay in the country.

It will require all your ingenuity, all your fancy (and more than ever *I* possessed), to find real materials in this country for a humorous entertainment. There is such a universal sameness of manner and character, so uniform a style of walking and looking, of dressing and thinking, that I really think I knew as much of them in October as I know of them now in February. The real unadulterated natives are only one remove from the Quakers: they never joke themselves, and they cannot see it in others. They would stare at *you* as a white wonder; and be perfectly amazed how any man under a hundred years of age, could possibly have collected so many good jokes, for they would be utterly incredulous that a man could utter his own wit. As they have never seen such people, they are not obliged to believe that they exist. If I excelled in narrative, and were a lecturer, allowed to be occasionally grave, I could find infinite variety of materials to dwell upon, and rather

amusing too; but as I feel perfect conviction that I am never amusing without I assume the manner of another, I know not how to suggest matter for comic effects, out of mere observations. I should be very much inclined to remove many prejudices that exist between the two countries, and most anxious to do justice to the upper orders of people. They are well informed, polite, hospitable, unaffected. I can truly say, that I have never experienced more attentions in my own country. I do not believe, at least, I cannot discover, that they differ at all from the polished people of the same rank in England. They do not certainly approach to the ease and *finish* of our upper ranks. I should feel equally disposed to scourge, to flagellate, to score to the back-bone, ALL the middling and lower orders. They are as infinitely beneath the notions that Europeans entertain of them, as their superiors are above them. Not merely sullen and cold, but studiously rude. This I have no hesitation in saying. The stage-driver says, "Yes, *sir*," and "no, *sir*," to the ostler, but to a question from a person who has a clean neckcloth, he instantly draws up, and, in the most repulsive manner, answers, "No," "ay," or "very well." The upper orders are literally slaves to the lower. The poorest people in the country will submit to exist in the most miserable manner, with their families, rather than any one of them should be degraded by servitude. The consequence is, that all the menial situations are filled by negroes (niggers), and Irish and Scotch. This constitutes the great difficulty in picking up anecdote, character, or anything that would be called peculiarity, in Ireland or Scotland; even in dialect, the same disappointment follows the attempt. All that is attributed by foreigners to the English appears to belong to the Americans, but with exaggerations—reserve, coldness, monotony, &c. The gravity

of the upper orders, which is by no means displeasing, becomes perfect unkindness (to make use of no stronger expression) in the middling orders; for though I have used the term *lower*, I hardly know who they are, where they are, or how they exist. They appear to me to be too proud even to be seen. Not one American have I yet seen waiting at table, or in any situation where he might run the risk of being called servant. This is common-place to you, I am aware, but I mean to assure you that the tourists have not exaggerated it; they are all within the mark.

You will from this perceive what difficulty I have to discover character or peculiarities. If I enter into conversation with a coachman, he is Irish; if a fellow brings me a note, he is Scotch. If I call a porter, he is a negro. I can't come at the American without I go to porter-houses, and that I cannot condescend to do. There are no phrases, no intonations, and no instances of bad pronunciation, false grammar, or incorrect English, that I cannot trace to be of English origin. Yorkshire, Somersetshire, and above all, London, have supplied them most copiously. Here arises another difficulty. The impression would be, that there is no novelty in this — this has been done before — these are English characters. A week in Ireland would supply more drollery than twelve months here. Then again, all persons are dressed alike, nobody well-dressed, no one shabby. The judge, the barrister, the shop-keeper, the President, the member of Congress, the mechanic, the servant, without the slightest variation. Even in the courts of justice there is no distinction of ranks. The judge in the shabby blue coat and striped waistcoat, that the tipstaff wears. Now, I feel perfectly satisfied that my audience would yawn at this *description* of the people, even if it could boast of the

recommendation of novelty. The Yankee is a term given by all the inhabitants of the other parts of the United States to those of the east exclusively. The larger cities boast of superiority in every respect, and speak of the Rhode Islander, and the Massachusetts-man, exactly as the English speak of *all* Americans, and have a contempt for a Yankee.

I have just come from Boston in the latter State, and certainly I have discovered more of character there than in the cities of New York, Baltimore, or Philadelphia, where the language, *generally*, is better spoken than in London, or any part of England. I quite agree with you in your remarks, that a journal is necessary on a tour, but I doubt its use in America.* "The court of justice" is dulness itself. The Quakers' meeting would be a better subject, if the Quakers talked as much as the counsellors; and this again would be Westminster Hall on an uninteresting day, without wigs. The "travellers" I have acted upon. But there is no "travellers' room" at an inn. All travellers of every description are shown into the same room, and silence reigns amidst the smoke of cigars. The only notions I have had (droll to say) *is*, a coach scene, "*à la diligence.*" Some of the summer dresses would be new to the English. Negro women dressed like Quakers — very common here. A very fat negro, with whom I met, driving a stage-coach (which are almost as peculiar as the French), and urging his horses by different tunes on a fiddle, while he ingeniously fastened the reins round his neck. This would give an opportunity for the only costume which differs from that of our

* His own extraordinary memory rendered a journal unnecessary; his memoranda were to be found only on the "written tablets of the brain."—A. M.

own country, the summer dress. With respect to songs, I really fear that I shall hardly be able to suggest subjects. The only striking subject for a patter-song * is the inordinate love of title; a remarkable instance of the weakness and inconsistency of these *simple* republicans. Though the honour of knighthood bestowed on their President, even if he were a Washington, would rouse the country into a civil war, they are more ridiculously ostentatious of the petty titles that are recognised, than any people under the sun. There is not any regular military establishment; a militia is kept up by occasional drillings, &c.; and, in case of war, this is their only effective force. The officers, therefore, are composed of all ranks of persons; and whether they have actually served or not, whether retired, or in present exercise, they tenaciously exact their titles. On every road, even at the meanest pothouse, it is common to call out, "Major, bring me a glass of toddy!" "Captain Obis, three segars, and change for a dollar!" "Why are we so long changing horses, colonel?" This was addressed to our coachman—A fact! "Why, Achilles is gone to get one of the horses shod, but the major is a good hand, he'll soon clap four shoes on."—"Othello, run to captain Smith's for a pound of cheese."

I heard at New York—"Colonel Hunter, your bread is by no means so good as that you baked at the beginning of the year."—"Sheriff, your health."—"Judge, a glass of wine."—"Counsellor, allow me to send you some beef." They are chiefly remarkable for accenting the

* A *patter-song* means one of those for which he was so celebrated, with *speaking* between every verse.—A. M.

wrong syllable, in (eng*ine*, genu*ine*,* *en*quiry. Located is in general use; *approbated*, *ultimated*, &c.) "Admire," is to have an inclination to do anything, as, "I should *admire* to skate to-day."† "Ugly," means *ill-tempered.* "It is a pity such a pretty woman should be so *ugly.*" If they speak of a "plain woman" they say she is *awful.* "Clever" is *good-natured;* as, "He 's a *clever* fellow, but a damned fool." "Considerable, in the general sense, but as an adverb; as, "He is *considerable* rich." "Guess" is always used in cases where no doubt exists: — "I *guess* I have a headach." "Servants" are called *helps.* "Slick" is *nice.* "A *slick* potato." "He did it *slickee*" (cleverly); and, "*slick* right away." "My wife died *slick* right away;" that is, she went off pleasantly, but suddenly. "That is a little too damned bad;" "a little grain of water." "*Pro*gress," used as a verb; as, "I guess our western States *pro*gress very fast;" *i. e.* improve. "Ad*mir*able is generally said. The particle *to* is very generally used (not by learned persons) after a verb; as, "I guess it 's a fine day. Will you take a walk?" "I should admire *to*," or, "I have no occasion *to*." "When were you *to* Boston?" "Have you been out in the rain?"—"Yes, but I had not ought *to*."

The following dialogue was furnished me by an ear-witness, who knew my desire to collect: — "Anything new to day, Mr. B.?"—"I guess I have not heard anything."—"How 's your lady?"—"Nicely. She *pro*gresses fast under Doctor A. She comes on slick, and

* All the expressions with the ( ) are used at the bar and in the pulpit.

† *Admire* is used in the same sense in our county of Suffolk.—A. M.

grows quite fleshy."—"How 's Miss Sabrina?"—"She 's quite *good* (well). She 's a *foine girl*."—"I think she is, though she 's rather awful."—"I never saw her ugly in my life, and if she had but a pretty face, she 'd be *complete*! Real!"—"Have you taken her to the theayter yet?"—"I hadn't ought *to*."—"Why?"—"I guess I can't afford it."—"Is not Mathews a favo*rite* of yours?"—"Not by no manner of means. I wish he 'd take himself off."—"I reckon he 'll take us off when he 's at home in his own country again."—"He won't dare to. We would not suffer that there."—"He 's a smart fellow" (applied to any talent); "but I like a steady actor, as gives us time to admire him, and find out his beauties."

They use the word *raised* for *born*; or erecting a building:—"Where were you *raised*?"—"In Virginia."—"I guess you have considerable hogs and niggers?"—"Yes, we have plenty of them black cattle."—"Will you come and take a little grain of brandy, or whisky?"—"I should admire to, for I 'm considerable thirsty; but I must first go and speak to the *gentleman* as looks after my nags."—"Where does your horse keep?"—"At Colonel Crupper's livery-stables."—"I guess the colonel has pretty damned bad help?"—"The ostler as tends the stable is a spry likely lad?"—"Yes, he 's spry and well-looking, but pretty ugly."—"I don't mind his ugliness. If he showed me any of it, I 'd make him clear out pretty damned quick."—"You 'll find me at Sampson's grog-shop, I guess. You won't be long?"—"I 'm coming right back. Tell Sampson to put a little grain of bitters in my brandy."

The strongest *character* is the *Landlord* of an inn. He is the most independent person in America. You *must* be impressed with the idea that he confers a favour upon *you*, or it is in vain to expect any accommodation. He can't be

caricatured; I won't spare him an inch. He is, too, the most insolent rascal I ever encountered; he is the double-distilled of those qualities I described as appertaining to the middling orders. Here I can *personate* to advantage. It will be my main stay, my sheet-anchor. I have already three or four distinct specimens of the same species. The effect will depend more on manner than matter. *Par exemple.* If you arrive at the inn, the regular system of inattention and freezing indifference is instantly apparent. No one appears. You enter the house, and search about for a landlord or waiter. Probably you pass the former, but fearing he may be the Judge or the Governor of the state, you are afraid to address him. You find a *nigger* — no mistaking *him.* "Where's your master?" (A black look). "*Dat* Missa Rivers."

The following little dialogue took place with me. I respectfully solicited a room for myself and friend (an Englishman, who, like myself, was aware of the manners and customs, and *hoped* to be annoyed, for the sake of others "At Home.") "Can we have a private room?"—"*I guess you can, if there isn't nobody in it.*"—*Mathews.* "Can we have some dinner?"—*Landlord.* "Dinner! why, we've dined these two hours! It's four o'clock!" (All ranks dine at a *table d'hôte*). *Mathews.* "Still, we have had no dinner; perhaps, sir, you would oblige us?"—*Landlord.* "I suspect, rather, we've something left as we had for our dinner. But you should have come sooner if you wanted to dine; this is no time for dinner, after everybody's done. It puts one's *helps* out of the way."—*Mathews.* Well, sir, the help will be paid for his trouble; therefore try your best for us." A Hottentot Adonis appeared, with his sleeves tucked up to his shoulders (thermometer 90°), an effluvia arising from his ebony skin, that he ingeniously overpowered by one of greater power from a leg of

lamb. *Mathews.* "Any port-wine?"—"Yes, massa, berry good a wine."—*Mathews.* "Bring a bottle." A bottle of mulled *Day and Martin* was brought. "Any ice?"—"Not to-day, massa; none in Elizabeth Town; a can't get a any *Sudday*" (Sunday). At this moment enters mine host, who takes a chair, and sits down with his hat on and a segar in his mouth, and inquires who we are — where we are going, &c. "*Colonel Gympentike* and *Major Foozle*, going to Bristol." "*Mathews.* Your wine is very hot."—*Landlord.* "Why, I don't know for that; it *keeps* in the bar."—*Mathews.* "Have you no cellar?"—*Landlord.* "I suppose I have, but not for *that.* It 's always in the bar right an end."—*Mathews.* "It 's rather thick; have you had it long?"—*Landlord.* "Three weeks and a bit. I fetched it in my chay myself from Philadelphee, a little while back."

At four in the morning a messenger arrived in the mail, who inquired for me, having a letter for me from a friend, advising me to fly, as the fever, he knew, was in Elizabeth Town. Mine host *guessed* I was the man, and entered my room with a candle. *Landlord.* "A letter for you, I reckon."—*Mathews.* "Did the messenger tell you to give it me in the middle of the night?"—*Landlord.* "I guess he did not. It was my own contrivance."—*Mathews.* "It is an odd hour to wake a man."—*Landlord.* "I guess I did the right thing, and that there is always propriety. Whatever you perform, fulfil *that* right away." I was so tickled that I said: "You 're a pleasant man; how 's your wife?"—*Landlord.* "Why, she 's tolerable well, but *pretty poor*" (very thin). "*Mathews.* "Well, I shall not get up until eight or nine, therefore adieu! thou lovely youth. I must still think it was very extraordinary to disturb me."—*Landlord.* "Ah, I don't mind remarks when I fulfils propriety. I 'm an honest man, and I pre-

sumes I have done the right thing, and then remarks is equal. I am a *docile* man in church and state."—*Exit with candle.*

Another instance, lately in my journey from Boston to New York; nearly the same dialogue; but a different-looking being; a dear little punchy fellow, with a hat as large as a tea-board, and *such* a tail! He was just going to-bed; and when we asked for supper, he said, "Why, we have supped these three hours; what made you come to-night?" But this interview requires personation, and is one of the few instances of originality.

I shall be rich in black fun. I have studied their broken English carefully. It is pronounced the real thing, even by the Yankees. It is a pity that I dare not touch upon a preacher. I know its danger, but perhaps the absurdity might give a *colour* to it — a *black* Methodist! I have a specimen from life, which is relished highly in private. A *leetle* bit you shall have. By the by, they call the *nigger* meetings "*Black Brimstone Churches.*" "My wordy bredren, it a no use to come to de meetum-house to ear de most hellygunt orashions if a no put a de *cent* into de plate; de spiritable man cannot get a on widout de temporalities; twelve 'postles must hab de candle to burn. You dress a self up in de fine blue a cot, and a bandalore breechum, and tink a look like a gemman, but no more like a gemman dan put a finger in a de fire, and take him out again, widout you put a de money in a de plate. He lend a to de poor, lend to de Law (Lord), if you like a de secoority drop a de cents in to de box. My sister in a de gallery too dress em up wid de poke a de bonnet, and de furbelow-tippet, and look in de glass and say, 'Pretty Miss Phyllis, how bell I look!' but no pretty in de eye of de Law" (Lord) "widout a drop a cent in de plate. My friend and bredren, in

my endeavour to save you, I come across de bay in de stim a boat. I never was more shock dan when I see de race a horse a rubbin down. No fear o' de Law afore dere eye on de Sabbat a day, ben I was tinking of de great enjawment my friend at a Baltimore was to have dis night, dey rub a down de horse for de use of de debbil. Twix you and I, no see what de white folk make so much fun of us, for when dey act so foolish demselve, dey tink dey know ebery ting, and dat we poor brack people know noting at all amose (almost). Den shew dem how much more dollars you can put in de plate dan de white meetum-houses. But, am sorry to say, some of you put three cent in a plate, and take a out a quarter a dollar. What de say ven you go to hebben? Dey ask you what you do wid de twenty-two cent you take out of de plate when you put in de tree cent? what you go do den?"

I have several specimens of these black gentry that I can bring into play, and particularly scraps of songs, and malaprops, such as Mahometan below Cæsar (Thermometer below zero). &c.

SONG.

Oh! love is like de pepper-corn;
It make me act so cute.
It make de bosoms feel so warm,
And eye shine like new boot!
I meet Miss Phillis tudder day
In berry pensive mood;
She almost cry her eyes away
For Pomp's ingratitude.

2.

O lubby brushing maid, said I,
What makee look so sad?
Ah! Scip, de brooteous virgin cry,
I feel most debblish bad!

For Pomp he stole my heart away,
Me taught him berry good;
But he no lub me now he say!
Chah! what ingratitude!

I can no more; but you shall hear again shortly from,

Yours most truly,

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Philadelphia, Feb. 25th, 1823.

I have an opportunity of sending rather a larger packet than I should despatch by post, by a gentleman of Philadelphia, whom I hereby introduce to your notice as well worthy of your civilities. I have received attentions from him in the way of little acts of kindness, for which I am very grateful.

He set me on my journey to New York, as they say in Old York, and rode twenty miles with me to keep up my spirits when I first went there. It will, doubtless, be a satisfaction to you to hear an account from any eye-witness of my brilliant reception here last night, in the midst of a snow-storm that would have driven English people away from the theatre, like a flock of wild geese.

Price has come on with me, like a good fellow, to take care of me; and I am at a peculiar sort of a house, for America, where I am really comfortable,—a rarer word here than in France.

Mr. Waln will describe to you the nature of the establishment. It is nearer the English mark than any house in the country; and there is plenty of water, thank Heaven! The regular allowance of an American inn is about a pint daily, with one towel nine inches square, and one remove only from India paper.

I have written a long letter, as you will see, to Smith. Notwithstanding the nature of the letter I have written to him, I do not despair of a good entertainment being formed from my trip.

The auction at Boston will show the extraordinary prices given for boxes. It was made a wonder of in Kean. Observe that the biddings were for choice of boxes. If a man wished to get No. 4 as the best box for hearing, he bids 12 dollars, and the box holds 9—a dollar for each seat, so that his box costs 21 dollars.

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Philadelphia, March 6th, 1823.

In your last, you say I did not mention the Philipps and Johnsons. Surely I have lately. I did not see the former until nearly December: they are now gone a journey of about fifteen hundred miles (Lord help them!) to New Orleans, and I suspect are stuck by the way; for the winter has recommenced within a week. I saw ——— on Sunday last, looking more ferocious than ever. I feel embarrassed in his presence always, and only endured it here; yet he is so fond of me that my hand aches after his pressure of it. I am going on swimmingly, — a charming audience here.

I shall send another thousand pounds directly I arrive in New York; but the exchange at present is very much against England. I do not send you the regular receipts now, because I am paid certain, and therefore do not get a regular list; but you may tell Miller that I opened to 1100 dollars, and that the next three houses have been as good.

I am most particularly comfortable here: the only

lodging where everything has been to my mind. My baggage arrived yesterday, which left Boston on February 4th. Charming country for travelling!

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Philadelphia, March 14th, 1823.

I have broken to you by degrees how I was situated at Baltimore; that is, if Rolls's letter is not gone to the bottom. If it is, I now tell you for the first time that the yellow fever raged at Baltimore while I was there, and that the fewest deaths weekly were forty. It was kept from me ten days. The horrible scene of misery and devastation in the theatre was also kept from me until I acted and rehearsed. I am at this moment appalled at the recollection. What could I do? It was useless to write to you on the subject; it would have been inhuman. In the midst of the horrors, the *curiosity* to see me brought three or four good houses. I mentioned them, but said nothing of the bad ones. I acted three nights, and my profits were not one pound sterling nightly. The only wonder was, that people would go to the play at all, in a population of mourning. Had I known where to fly to, I would have gone. The indignation I felt at the deception, and the terms, and contrasting Liverpool, which I had left, &c. was almost too much to bear. I find now I cannot conceal it from you: your suspicions expressed to Charles were perfectly just. The vanity of those persons that have starred it here exaggerated everything. I have done more, infinitely more, than any of them; and New York is the only place worth talking about. I should have returned from Boston, but for Price's

really liberal and enterprising spirit. He is the soul of generosity. If it had not been for the calamity (which it is worse than childishness to allow to make one unhappy) I should have realized all my expectations here. I have been successful to wonder everywhere. The size of the theatres, however, capabilities, &c. have all been exaggerated. A thousand dollars sounds largely; but in November they could not purchase 200*l.* British—here is the deception. The horrible changes of the climate, too, prevent all communication with the theatre on some nights. The direct reverse has taken place here respecting the entertainments. They have gone off joyously,—a beautiful theatre, and a delightful audience. Washington Irving's introductions have procured me the best society, and very good it is; all but the very first is very bad indeed.

C. MATHEWS.

I will introduce here some remarks made by the American press on Mr. Mathews's performance at Philadelphia.

Having been heretofore among the theatrical heretics in regard to the superior excellence of this gentleman's comic powers; and willing, as a stranger, to give him welcome, we have abstained from expressing our sentiments on his performances, of which, however, we have been a frequent spectator. Convinced at length, that he has a fair claim to the extended reputation he enjoys, we feel it but simple justice to throw into the ladened scale our mite of approbation, which, though long reserved, we feel will not be the less valued from being the result of an uninfluenced

and cautious judgment. The qualities necessary to the formation of a first-rate actor are of the rarest kind; for the lines that divide true humour from caricature are often so minute as to be almost indefinable; and although we are always sensible of the presence of either, we feel it difficult to describe in what they respectively consist. The great excellence of Mr. Mathews consists in the niceness of his discrimination in these respects, by which he is enabled to elicit the richest fund of merriment from characteristic peculiarities, without violating the truth of nature. To a judgment thus admirably chastened are added the most versatile powers of execution that have probably fallen to the lot of man. So perfect is the mastery of his voice, and so complete and varied are its intonations and modifications, that as a mere ventriloquist he could not fail to attract universal admiration; while his command of face is as complete in the display of the ridiculous, as ever Cooke was in the exhibition of the intenser feelings. With power as wonderful as the magic mirror of Eastern fable, it displays, in rapid succession to the convulsed spectator, the loutish stare of rustic simplicity, the artful leer of vulgar cunning, the ridiculous moroseness of petty misanthropy, and the absurd affectation of ignorant pride; whilst his adaptation of voice, and identity of manner, fill up the portraits with the most exquisitely laughable perfection.

It will be perceived that these observations have little reference to Mr. Mathews as a dramatic performer, in which, though excellent, he is inferior to himself "At Home." In the former, his exuberant talent is repressed by an obvious anxiety to preserve the propriety of the scene and character; and he who would view Mathews in all his glory should follow him in his uncle *Baffin* through the "Sights of London," embark with him in his "Trip

to Paris," take passage in the "Diligence," or revel with him in a "Christmas at Brighton." *

Mr. Mathews is a humourist, and one of high powers. Everything seen or heard operates on a mind like his in an eccentric and original way, and furnishes food to the master appetite of his nature. On a mind so organized, the uncommon and the ridiculous never fail to strike with truth and force; and they are again thrown out with the strength of true humour,—not with the distorted aspect of vulgar mimicry. He has the singular talent, and it is one of no common order, of compressing into an individual the various characteristics which mark a class; and by the exhibition of one, gives a fair and rich idea of the whole species. He repeated the splendid passage about "Universal Emancipation," in Curran's defence of Hamilton Rowan, in a manner to produce a sensation akin in nature and degree to that which we may suppose to have attended its original delivery. The sentiment operated powerfully, conveyed as it was in a style of declamation new to an American audience; highly impressive in itself, and understood to be a faithful copy. †

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Philadelphia, March 22d, 1823.

This week has been spent in the old way—anxious hope of another letter. My engagement here will finish next week. From hence I go to New York; and on the 16th of May, if not earlier, I shall take my departure. It will be

* Franklin Gazette, 15th March, 1823.
† National Gazette, March 22, 1823.

useless to write again, therefore, after the receipt of this, which cannot easily arrive before the middle of April, and a reply cannot reach me. I even doubt if I shall be soothed by any remarks you might be induced to make on my last. My entertainments keep up here. "The Youthful Days," last night, went off as well as ever it did in England. Joseph Bonaparte, the ex-king of Spain, has been three or four times. He is very like the portraits of Napoleon, and has a most pleasing expression of countenance. The other evening I was encored in the Playhouse song; and, as I left the stage, he applauded, and, stretching forward, nodded at me very good naturedly. I have frequently dreamt of Napoleon, and at this moment it appeared as though his countenance beamed on me and patronized me.

This has been a week of great events; but the rumours have doubtless reached you. The war with Spain comes here *viâ* England; but the dreadful conflagration at Canton, probably, will not be communicated much sooner than the arrival of this,—ten thousand houses destroyed!—I purchased the crapes for you in good time. Canton goods have risen 30 per cent. since the arrival of the news; nearly all the manufactories have been destroyed. Valparaiso, in South America, has been nearly destroyed by an earthquake, and an immense number of lives lost; and a dreadful fire here, in which I *might* have been doubly interested. The principal hotel, the largest in the city, and the Washington Hall, the largest room in America, kept for concerts, assemblies, &c. capable of holding two thousand people, were both burnt down on the same night. An exorbitant bill in September, when Price was with me, was the cause of my being taken in, per favour, where I am, where there is only one bed, though it is a sort of hotel; and had not that accommodation been offered, I must

have been at the Mansion House; and had I been there I *must* have lost all my clothes, had I even saved my life. The hall was the only place where I could have performed, had I taken a room, which at one time I was on the point of doing. I wrote from Cooper's house in September, and have not seen him since. They are altogether now at New Orleans,—*only* thirteen hundred miles from hence! The frost is, I believe, broken now, and the weather delicious.

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

On board the steam-boat; within sight of
New York, April 1st, 1823.

I write this in great haste, merely to say that I am well, and everything is going on as well as I could wish; but I am in agony for fear this should not reach you by the packet of this day, as she will take out papers with accounts of a most terrific storm on Sunday last, that has done immense damage by sea and land. If it should reach your ears by the packet, and you have no letter from me, I am apprehensive of your uneasiness. By the 8th you shall know all; but, briefly, we were to leave Philadelphia on Sunday morning by the steam-boat, which was to take us thirty miles on our road to New York, and then to go on by private carriage. A snow-storm arose early that morning,—the most tremendous I ever heard. We got up at eight o'clock, to be ready to start at ten. I thought Price would wish to go; but he had home in his eye. About half-past nine, from the unprecedented violence of the morning, the boat, then near the wharf, was run down by a larger vessel, stove in, and sunk in a few minutes. This delay, and others on the road (for we went on by land),

prevented our reaching New York, as we meant, yesterday, when I should have had ample time to prepare my letter for to-day. We got on as far as Brunswick, where we slept last night, and took steam-boat this morning at six o'clock. It is now ten o'clock, and, thank God! we have our port in view. Price has suggested that we may probably pass the packet, which will be just getting out of the harbour, and the captain has promised to put us alongside. If so, I have the chance, and therefore will take advantage of it.

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

New York, April 7th, 1823.

Your large packet, though a dismal one as to deaths and accidents, was still very entertaining. There is an air of cheerfulness throughout; and such letters are valuable to me. You know how I suffer from depression, even when surrounded by comforts; and you might calculate how I must occasionally suffer when removed at such a distance from all I love, and in a country not yet civilized, where real comforts are not known, and where miserable disappointment has followed enterprise and industry. I have throughout put the most cheerful face upon the matter, out of tenderness and consideration for you.

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

New York, April 15th, 1823.

Yesterday I had the pleasure of receiving another letter from you. Your account of the weather is appalling, and quite reconciles me to my sufferings here.

A new winter commenced on that dreadful day, the 30th, on which I travelled from Philadelphia; the whole country was covered with snow. You are cheered with spring, a season unknown here; not a bud, not even a little paltry attempt at a leaf, is to be seen at this present writing. But for the sun, "Oh, *my* Ma!" I don't think you have ever seen it in its full brilliancy. We hear much of an Italian sky in England, because there are not sufficient travellers to this country to place its advantages on record; but all impartial travellers declare that the atmosphere here is superior to any part of the world. Englishmen whom I have met here, who have lived much in Italy, all allow that the most magnificent sight they ever witnessed is a sun-set in this country. So this climate has its advantages. Indeed I suppose these are pretty fairly balanced in all countries. I have not seen two days of rain in succession since I arrived. It frequently pours the whole day; but you may rely on a brilliant sun the next to compensate.

There has been, for some years, an old peasant in Rhode Island, Connecticut, who has had an extraordinary fame for the cure of lameness caused by bruises, contractions, &c. performed originally gratis by him upon the poor of his neighbourhood. A species of shampooing was his practice, aided by an embrocation from herbs of his own discovery, which cannot be analysed; but this secret he has bequeathed to his son, who has performed more wonders than a man. He has been induced to leave his home, which the father never did, to cure a person who could not go to him. When I was at Boston I saw the patient, who, from seeing me lame, applied to the Consul (Manners) to say it was his duty, in his official situation, to guard the interests of his countrymen, and that he ought not to allow

me to go out of this country a cripple, when I might make a certainty of being restored. Manners brought him to me. His case had been, in the first instance, exactly similar to mine, but infinitely exaggerated. He had been pronounced incurable by the surgeons. One leg was two inches contracted; the limb withered to the size of his arm; and he was in bed twelve months. In five weeks he was cured; and now walks as well as ever. He is a gentleman; and begged me with *tears in his eyes** to try the man. At least ten such cases were mentioned at Boston; and I was urged to try it by one of the first physicians there, who said, "Sir, the man is an excellent anatomist; he has a valuable secret as an embrocation; and he can bestow time on a patient, which we can't afford. He has done wonders; try him by all means."

I saw him. He takes no fee if he pronounces a case incurable; and there is *not one instance* of his saying "I can cure," in which he has not kept his word. In ten minutes he stated with perfect confidence, "I can restore you, Sir, entirely." He asked three weeks' time from me, and promised to come to me at New York, on my return from Philadelphia. His fame, however, has so increased by the actual miracles he has performed since I left Boston, that I have just had a hint which I fear looks like his failing in his promise to me. I do not like to give up such a chance, after having my expectations raised so high; but I fear I can only accomplish it by a journey to Boston. In that case I shall probably not leave until early in June.

I cannot hear your approval or otherwise of this scheme unfortunately now; but I feel confident that you will think I am right, as there can be no harm in trying. I believe a person must be himself lame seven years before he

* A phrase my husband always employed when he wished to express peculiar earnestness of entreaty.—A. M.

can quite appreciate my joy at the distant hope of restoration.

In my next I hope I shall be able to give you some decisive information upon this to me important point. My firm opinion and belief is, that I was providentially induced to come here to be restored to the right use of my limbs: if it should be so, how I shall be repaid for all my sufferings! I am in excellent health, and everything going on as well as I could wish. I am receiving at present my 150*l.* per week certain; and shall play until the second week in May.

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

New York, April 30th, 1823.

As I suspected, I was too late for the last packet. It was lucky that a person, just as I was on the point of going on shore at West Point, whence I was to proceed to New York, hinted to me the uncertainty, or you would not have heard from me at all.

This was my first trip of pleasure since I arrived, and most amply was I gratified. I went one hundred and sixty miles in a steam-boat, up one of the most magnificent rivers in the world,—the Hudson, so much spoken of by Washington Irving. It is from three to four miles broad in many parts; running through a mountainous country for the most part; in others, highly cultivated, with various well-built and populous towns on its banks; other parts again, richly wooded. Indeed, for variety of beauty my most romantic expectations were realized; but I was intoxicated with childish joy at the sight of a waterfall, I may say for the first time; the width a quarter of a mile, the height from seventy to

eighty feet, dashing perpendicularly over the rock, and creating a foam that ascends so as to convey the notion of smoke rising from an immense volcano. I was perfectly enraptured and lost in wonder. My enjoyment was, however, incomplete; for I wished the whole time that yourself and Charles could be there to participate with me in the pleasure.

I commenced my last engagement here on the night of my return. I have been kept in the most provoking suspense. I expected a decisive answer on my return here, and I got it; but it only related to one fact,—that the doctor could not come here to me. I immediately wrote to Manners to put several questions to him, necessary for me to ascertain before I wrote to you, as to time, expense, &c. and entreated an answer by to-day, in time to write to you. No letter; and I have been fuming all day. I want your advice; indeed any but my own—I know not how to act—I can hardly make up my mind. So close to the water's edge, and Liverpool almost in sight, being only three thousand miles, to go two hundred and forty miles away from it; and yet it is so strangely tempting! However, I am compelled once more to delay my final decision.*

Yesterday brought me your charming, cheerful journal up to the 11th of March, with the pleasing intelligence of the arrival of the money safe. I hope by this time the other 1000*l.* is at Highgate. It might be that the news of the death of "Glorious John" was in London previously to the date of yours. Of course, you had not heard it. We heard it here a fortnight since, by a vessel from Havre. Poor Kemble! I relieved my mind and my head from the effects of a very blue fit by crying heartily at the news.

* His final decision was to give up the chance of his cure, and proceed homewards at once.—A. M.

If I play at Liverpool, as Lewis made me promise to do, I shall be delighted at your proposition to meet me. All these points really *shall* be settled in my next.

You are already blessed with cheering weather, buds, blossoms, and verdure; therefore it is too late for me to act the comforter; but with respect to variable climate, this is a caricature of ours. We have had summer heat and hard frost since the 20th of this month. The variation is precisely that of England, with this trying difference, that the thermometer is sometimes 98 and sometimes below Zero, and a variation of thirty degrees will take place in twenty-four hours. It has its charms, however, as I have said before; and I have less reason to complain than most people, as I verily believe I have never witnessed two days without cheering sunshine. The natives are alarmed at the object I worship; therefore I am always at variance, as their constant study is to exclude my greatest blessing. Curtains, verandas, and Venetian blinds, are the most saleable articles in America. A nigger waiter here (for I am driven to *boarding*, in the house with Price,) came in this morning and said, "Missa Maters, a bau (boy) from de teetur come to say dere no hearse five miles off," and he asked "our Bridget" afterwards, who was dead? It was a postponement of the rehearsal of the "Finger Post," in which I act on Friday next.

An Irishman at the house of a friend of mine, the author of "The Spy," and "The Pioneers," discovered a part of the wood-work of a chimney-piece on fire, that endangered the whole house. He rushed up to his master and announced the alarming intelligence. Down he rushed with him; a large kettle of boiling water was on the fire. "Well, why don't you put out the fire?"—"I can't, surr." "Why, you fool! pour the water upon it."—"Sure it 's hot water surr."—Fact!

A thousand thanks, my dearest wife, for your cheerful, amusing, and truly affectionate letter. I need not say I trust that my anxiety to see you is equal, if not greater, than yours to welcome my return. I live now but in this delightful hope in perspective. God bless thee and dear Charley! C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

New York, May 15th, 1823.

It is my intention to embark hence, on Sunday the 24th, in the packet-ship Meteor, Captain Cobb, and hope to be at home, please God! before my birth-day, the 28th of June. Since I wrote to you last, I have received your journal up to the 5th of April, exposing to me for the first time the wretched state of health to which you have been doomed in my absence. Indeed, indeed, I sympathise most sincerely with you, and grieve most truly that I have been, though the innocent, yet the real cause of your sufferings by my unfortunate expedition. Oh! my prophetic soul! I may say; for I always declared that the most severe pang at the calamity here was the perfect conviction of the shock it would be to your nerves. I trust that your well-meant and kind deception is not carried on now; and that I may flatter myself with the hope that I shall find you, as you say, quite restored to health. God grant it may be so!

I am quite resolved now on my course. No advantage under Heaven should induce me to inflict so cruel a penalty upon you as a journey to Liverpool. You must be convinced of my entire ignorance of your state of health, when I even hinted at it. No; the moment I arrive at Liverpool I will write to you and inform you of the time of my pro-

bable arrival at home. I have written to Lewis again, by the Columbia, and informed him of my new determination. So now, my dearest wife, I have nothing to add, but that as my prayers have been unceasing for your health and happiness, they will be redoubled for our happy, happy meeting, and the entire restoration of your health. I am astonished how you could get through such laborious letters, and the ingenuity of your innocent deceit throughout. What a deceitful pair we have been! At the very time you were laying your plans, I was plotting here; but I have never been deceived in my feelings and my forebodings. I possess the gift of second sight, if anybody ever did. If I wanted anything to endear Charles to me more strongly than ever, it is his conduct towards you. God will bless him for it.

C. MATHEWS.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Mr. Mathews at New York in the character of *Othello*—Success of the Attempt.—Anticipation by the Americans that Mr. Mathews would, on his return to England, ridicule their Peculiarities.—Public Dinner given to him.—Invitation to Montreal, declined by Mr. Mathews.—Letter to Mrs. Mathews: destructive storm; providential escape.—Mr. Mathews's arrival in England.—Letter from Mr. Mathews to Mr. Miller: the homeward voyage.—Mr. Mathews's performance of *Othello* at Liverpool.—Letter from Mr. Theodore Hook to Mr. Mathews.—Mr. Hook's sketches of himself.—Commission to Mr. Mathews, jun. by Lord Blessington.—Letter from Mr. Mathews to a friend.—Mr. Mathews's engagement to perform in the regular drama—his journey to Dublin.—Letter to Mrs. Mathews: a stage-coach nuisance.—Mr. Mathews's dislike of idle visitors.—Letters to Mrs. Mathews: arrival at Seapoint; success at Dublin.

About the middle of May, Mr. Mathews was induced to appear at New York, in the character of *Othello*, which he had studied for the occasion. What led him to perform such a part I totally forget, although I have some indistinct recollection that it was in consequence of a wager made by Mr. Price. Strange to say, the attempt was received with great applause; and, being very

attractive, was several times repeated. I have found the first and second bill of this performance. On both those nights the tragedy was followed by the farce of "The Prize," in which he played *Lenitive.*

The following remarks, which appeared in America, on the performance, ought to find a place here.

The performance of last evening we consider one of the most extraordinary we ever witnessed. It will hardly be credited that Mr. Mathews most completely succeeded in the arduous character of *Othello!* We could not conceive that an actor, whose forte has been considered till now all comic, could so far divest himself of his humorous peculiarities, as to convey to his audience a very chaste, correct, pleasing, and even affecting picture of the unhappy Moor. In Mr. Mathews' delivery of the text, there was everything to applaud; in his action, nothing to condemn. To the business of the scene he was throughout most attentive, and in the third, fourth, and last acts, he afforded the most complete triumph of skill we have ever witnessed. The celebrated address to the duke and senators was judiciously given, with an air of modest firmness extremely pleasing; and to all the splendid passages which stud this beautiful tragedy, Mr. Mathews gave additional effect, by the simple eloquence of his delivery, and the correctness of his readings.

The following sensible remarks, which seem to anticipate that Mr. Mathews was likely to take away with him, for *home*-consumption, some cha-

racteristics of the Americans, appeared in America, just on the eve of his departure.

On Monday evening this extraordinary actor takes leave of the American audience, to return to the comforts of his home and family, and to those friends and associates which many years of professional services and an unquestionable character and deportment have acquired for him. He returns with profit, if not with improvement; and though it may be expected that some of our national peculiarities will form the subject of future entertainments, we are persuaded that he has discerned some traits worthy his esteem and respect. We should not complain if these peculiarities are presented in a rational and amusing way to an English audience; for Mathews has been entertaining us with many amusing hits and laughable absurdities at the expense of his own countrymen. We have, therefore, no right to expect an exemption from these professional sallies and satires.

As a tribute of respect, a public farewell dinner was given to him. The following notice of it appeared:—

To-day, a party of Mr. Mathews's friends give him a dinner at Sykes's Coffee-house. We have no doubt it will be a splendid one, as Mr. Sykes has been several days preparing for it. Tickets for this dinner *only* 10 dollars each!—A mere trifle!

Previously to his leaving America, Mr. Mathews received several invitations to visit Montreal.

TO CHARLES MATHEWS, ESQ.

DEAR MATHEWS,

All the good people of Montreal beg leave to offer you their good wishes, and at the same time to give you a cordial invitation to visit their city. This request they flatter themselves will be complied with, for two reasons,—First, because some time since, when in England, you mentioned how much happiness it would afford you to spend a short time with a friend of yours residing in this quarter, and that, should you ever come to America, you would endeavour so to do. The second reason is,—We presume as a loyal subject, it would not be congenial to your feelings to leave the Continent, not having manifested that regard and friendship you profess for your brother countrymen. Do not let us be disappointed, we beseech you. We promise you that at least you shall receive British fare and British hospitality; and you may certainly collect very much for our brethren at home to laugh at.

Yours sincerely,

TOM KING.*

To this, and a previous invitation, Mr. Mathews returned the following answer, addressed to

J. C. FISHER, ESQ.

MY DEAR SIR, New York, 22nd May, 1823.

I wish, through your paper, to make my acknowledgments for two very kind though anonymous invitations from Montreal; the former of which appeared some time ago, the latter in the Montreal Herald; and to convey my

* From the Montreal Herald, April 26, 1823.

unfeigned regret that a combination of circumstances has deprived me of the pleasure of visiting my fellow-subjects in the Canadas.

It most certainly was my original intention to offer my performances to a Canadian audience; but it is in recollection that I arrived in this country during the ravages of a most awful calamity, the duration of which materially altered my plans, and rendered it impossible for me to open in New York till November. Thus nearly two months of my limited time had elapsed before the commencement of my first engagement here.

I should have answered by some means the first invitation that reached me; but at that time I had still some hope, notwithstanding my engagements in the United States, of being able to accomplish the tour of Canada. In this expectation I was unavoidably disappointed. My engagements here did not terminate till the middle of May; and as I felt very anxious, for many cogent reasons, to be in England about the end of June, I was compelled to relinquish altogether the satisfaction I promised myself from a visit to Montreal and Quebec. I feel much flattered by the professional attention these two invitations on the part of some inhabitants of Montreal indicate; and notwithstanding my inability to comply with the wishes of my unknown correspondent in the Montreal Herald, I trust he will believe that I yield to no one in grateful attachment to my friends, and in true loyalty towards my King, in connection with my fellow-subjects. Should I ever set foot again on this hospitable continent, I think I can promise that I will not quit it a second time without paying a visit to British America.

Believe me yours very truly,

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

I was just in time to catch the last packet, owing to her having been injured in the gale; and I rejoice at the circumstance, because the enclosed paragraph might have reached England and the London papers without the contradiction. Such a storm, and such a journey, never did I see or dream of seeing! I wrote in such a hurry that I forget whether I told you one of the stage coaches was struck, during the gale, by a poplar tree falling, which killed one of Price's performers, of the name of Burslem, and severely injured the other passengers. We passed the place about an hour after the accident, and saw the horrible remains of this calamitous event. One of the players was killed. I was known to have left Philadelphia that day, and of course it was me. Everybody knew that Price was with me; thus arose the report. My baggage, as usual (for it has always happened so), was too late; and the play was put off here. Had I not been guarded by Price, who has my notions of travelling, I should most likely have been a traveller in that stage, as our steam-boat was sunk. My escapes are almost miraculous,—certainly providential; and I feel in them security for the future. I constantly pray to be preserved to see thee once more, my dearest. My health is excellent, and my appearance more *blooming* than ever. God bless and protect you both, my dear wife and boy!

C. MATHEWS.

By the active friendship of Mr. Freeling, I received the earliest information of my husband's approach to England; and I set off, accompanied

by Charles, to Liverpool, where we arrived some days earlier than Mr. Mathews, who landed about the 23rd of June in high health and spirits.

TO MR. MILLER.

DEAR MILLER, Liverpool, June 26th, 1823.

I have the pleasure of announcing to you my safe arrival. I landed on Monday evening after a thirty days' passage. We had fair winds and delicious weather for nineteen days; on the 21st we saw Cape Clear, and had the pleasure of spending the remaining nine days in the Channel. Like the ass between two bundles of hay, we were tantalized by the sight of Ireland in the morning, and Wales in the evening. We might have breakfasted at Waterford and supped in Milford Haven, with such rapidity did we sail when we tacked. Next day, Cork; evening, Carnarvon — Sunday morning, Dublin — night, within stone's throw of Holyhead light-house. However, as I never have been sick, and enjoy the best possible health and spirits at sea, I bore this with more philosophy than my friends, who know my nervous irritability on shore, would give me credit for. I had the pleasure of finding Mrs. Mathews and my son here most unexpectedly on my arrival, and the delight of finding them in good health. I am at least one year younger than when I left England, and highly gratified by my trip. Pray give my kindest regards to Mrs. Miller; and be assured that I am, as ever,

Yours very sincerely, C. MATHEWS.

P. S.—On my arrival, I found that Mr. Lewis and Mrs. Mathews had plotted to detain me here; and I am obliged to submit to perform three nights, and the same at Manchester. I shall be at home the week after next.

The known effects of Mr. Mathews's performance of *Othello* in America naturally gave the manager of Liverpool a desire to profit in a similar manner from such extraordinary attraction. Mr. Mathews never meant to repeat the performance; but Mr. Lewis tempted—Mammon led him on—and he consented, at the end of his engagement, *one night* more to *fret in buskins*. The announcement, as was expected, drew an immense house, and his performance was received with attention and applause, similar to what attended it in America.

The following critical remarks upon his performance appeared in Liverpool at the time.

We think that Mr. Mathews' *Othello* was creditable to his judgment; in some passages he was brilliant, in all a chaste and judicious illustrator of his author. The performance throughout was interesting. Nevertheless, we had much rather meet him "At Home." Thus much we can, however, state, that those who, like ourselves, are induced to see Mr. Mathews in *Othello*, will be interested and amused. We were pleased to observe so much attention in the audience, and the character played so totally clear of imitation. Indeed we thought Mr. Mathews was trammelled by the fear of breaking into the tone of some performer, of whom, in other characters, he had perhaps given an imitation in the very same passage he was then uttering.

TO C. MATHEWS, ESQ.

DEAR MAT. Putney, Sunday evening.

Ever since I saw a note of yours to Powell, in which you call me *Theodorus*, I have been longing to get over to you; but, well aware of the *perpetual* engagements of men in your extremely idle profession, I have thought of rehearsals and "recollections;" and being some nine or ten miles from you, it would be rash to risk the journey on so slender a chance of catching you at home.

I take this opportunity,—it may seem somewhat late, of congratulating you upon your return to England, after a series, if one may judge by the newspapers, of worries and dangers. I confess I long to talk over your marine adventures; and, as I suppose there would be no chance of getting you here, if you will tell me any morning when you will be *chez vous*, except Tuesday or Thursday, I will drive over and breakfast with you—if you will let me.

I cannot look back to old times—my first days in the world, my dear Mat, without a mixture of pleasure and sorrow; and now, that seventeen years have rolled over our heads (and rubbed almost all the hair off mine) I own I am anxious once more to shake you by the hand.

I enclose Mrs. Mathews two sketches of myself at different periods, in order that, seeing what I *was*, she may not start with horror at seeing what I *am*. You will, I dare say, recognize the *genteel* one, which is done after your imitation of me. Pray, make my best remembrances to her; and, if *Twig* (Lord, when I remember him as I do!) is with you, to him also.

You hate paying postage for nonsense—revenge yourself by writing me an answer; and so, my dear Mat, good night, and God bless you. Yours always,

THEODORE HOOK.

These pen and ink sketches were done by Mr. Hook in admirable caricature of himself, at the different periods of his life mentioned. The excessive good humour of thus offering a laugh against himself, by one apt to excite it against others, is so contrary to the usual practice, that I think I cannot pay a higher compliment to Mr. Hook's understanding than in publishing such an agreeable evidence of its superiority. And some remarks which I add on this subject will furnish additional proof of the little stress laid by this highly-gifted man upon personal appearance, even at an age when such self-consideration is natural and allowable.

In connection with the above circumstances, I will here relate an anecdote told me at the time by Mrs. Mathews, of the celebrated person alluded to,* and which gave, and still gives, me a higher impression of his intellectual qualities than I ever have been able to acquire from his subsequent writings. The anecdote arose out of two portraits of himself, which accompanied the letter announcing his intended visit. The one underlined "T. H. as he was" represented the effigy (as seen from behind) of a slim youth about seventeen, in a costume *dandified* to the very highest degree that good taste would admit, and with a head covered by a profusion of black and richly curling hair, so arranged as to indicate that its owner was by no means incognisant of the attractions appertaining to that item of our personal economy. The other portrait, "T. H. as he is," exhibited the figure of a staid middle-aged gentleman,

* Mr. Theodore Hook.

with not much more "shape than a butter-firkin," with a gentle stoop, and a head bald as the back of your hand. On my making some remark on this latter metamorphosis as "the unkindest cut of all" that advancing years are apt to inflict upon us, at least if we are among those (which the T. H. of the youthful portrait evidently was) who set any store by personal appearance, Mrs. Mathews related to me the anecdote I refer to, as a proof that Mr. Hook's early dandyism did not reach much beyond the surface. In the course of one of his visits, Mr. Hook had intimated something to Mrs. Mathews, which she interpreted into a proof that he reckoned more on the outside of his head than the inside. He said nothing in reply; but the next day he appeared before her, shorn of his rich curls as closely as scissors could effect the office, and with his head powdered! I have not observed whether Mr. Gilbert Gurney has related this striking anecdote; but if not, he has omitted the most remarkable fact of his supposed hero's life.

I remember the most amusing part of Mathews's conversation consisted of those reminiscences of his early life, with which Mr. Hook was so intimately connected. Several anecdotes of this kind occur to me, which, though literal facts, are so extravagantly ludicrous in their details, that if they were related in a novel, or represented on the stage in a farce, they would be looked upon as even too *outré* for farcical fiction.*

The following letter from Lord Blessington gave the first promise of patronage and support to Charles, in the profession upon which he had set his heart:—

* "Recollections" of Mr. Mathews.

TO CHARLES MATHEWS, ESQ.

MY DEAR MATHEWS, Montjoy Forest, Aug. 2, 1823.

I am determined to build a house here next spring, and I should like to give your son an opportunity of making his *début* as an architect. If you like the idea, send him off forthwith to Liverpool or Holyhead, from which places steamers go, and, by the Derry mail, he will be here (resting a day in Dublin) in five days; but he must lose no time in setting off. I will bring him back in my carriage.

Remember me most affectionately to Mrs. Mathews; and believe me ever yours truly,

BLESSINGTON.

I saw Captain Saunders at Stratford, and he is to show me *the spot* on my return. I suppose it would be utterly useless my asking you to come with Charles; but if you wish to spend a week in one of the most beautiful places in Ireland, eat the best venison, highland mutton, and rabbits, and drink some of the best claret in Ireland, this is your spot. You would be received with undivided applause; and I would give you some comical dresses for your kit. Yours.—B.

Charles joyfully obeyed his Lordship's kind summons, and experienced from him not only active but unceasing friendship, to the period of his premature and lamented death.

The next letter, in answer to an application from a needy friend for a loan, will fully show, not only the liberality, but the extreme delicacy of the writer's feelings on such occasions—a libe-

rality that seldom met a *return* in any satisfactory shape.

TO ——— ESQ.

Highgate, August 9th, 1823.

I hardly know how to apologize to you for my seeming want of feeling. I have not time to say to you how much I am affected by it myself; it must appear absolutely brutal to you, but I trust you know enough of me to give me full credit for sufficient friendship for you to render wilful neglect impossible. When I came home I found really a large bundle of letters and notes,—my playing at Liverpool will cost me a ream of paper. All the managers in the three kingdoms have written to me. On seeing this load of interesting manuscripts upon my table, I became outrageous. They appeared to me to say, "Do you flatter yourself you are to enjoy yourself in quiet?—No, no; now you are at home you must fag; come, sir, write twenty letters the first day—begin." I resolved not to open one for two or three days, and I did not. At the end of that time I begged my wife to select those that really ought to be answered, and I would begin the unwilling task by degrees; some that were very long were put by. As she skimmed, she saw one from you. "Oh!" said I, "as I have just seen him, and know the purport of it, that cannot require an answer." Only two days back I read all these letters attentively, and I really was shocked when I saw how I had inadvertently treated you. This is the simple state of the case; and you must excuse me as graciously as you can.

I feel quite disposed to do what you wish, though I really am not rich. My American expedition has lost me a large sum out of the usual average of my income: but

that between ourselves. I will do what you require. I am really sorry so much time has been lost; I cannot allow more time to be added to it by the "law's delay." I don't know who to employ—I have no attorney — draw upon me for a part of the sum you mention — and we can talk of the *security after*. Write by return.

Love to your wife, in which my wife joins. You will be surprised to hear Charles is gone to Ireland, to Lord Blessington, who has sent for him to build a house.

I am all in a bustle. Yours ever,

C. MATHEWS.

If you will mention the sum you want for present use, my banker will probably manage the remittance.

On Mr. Mathews's return to London, he entered upon an engagement at the English Opera-house to perform in the drama. He met with a most enthusiastic welcome, and attracted crowded houses. During this period he performed the characters of *Monsieur Tonson*, *Caleb Quotem*, and some other old favourites with the town,—prefacing his dramatic performances with one of his mono-dramatic pieces, "The Polly Packet."

At the close of the English Opera-house, the following allusion to Mr. Mathews's late performances was made in the farewell speech of the season, delivered by Mr. Bartley:—

The first appearance of Mr. Mathews in the drama for six years has been greeted with a warmth of feeling bordering on enthusiasm; and the proprietor therefore congratulates himself on having been able to afford this wel-

come treat to the town, prior to an exhibition of the rich fund of character and anecdote which the quick perception, acute observation, and brilliant humour of that gentleman, has furnished for the budget of his next campaign, during his late trip to America.

Having concluded this engagement, Mr. Mathews proceeded to fulfil one in Dublin, for a month; prior to his return to town, in order to prepare for his re-appearance "At Home," in a new entertainment to be called his "Trip to America." Previously to his leaving London, however, another event of great domestic interest occurred,—no less than Charles's second departure from home, on a twelvemonth visit to Lord and Lady Blessington, at the Palace Belvidere, Naples. Soon after his return, with his noble friend, from a visit to Mountjoy, he quitted England with him in the same week that his father left town. Mr. Mathews proceeded to Dublin by the way of Liverpool, as the succeeding communication will explain.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Liverpool, Sept. 27th, 1823.

I arrived here in safety last night. I had some of my old luck in the coach; a woman with a child about two months old,—the most complete nuisance I ever encountered. There was no possibility of escape from its noises, asleep or awake, (I have no doubt it has been dead some hours;) the principal one was an extraordinary row,—

something midway between Dignum and a duck. After sucking mamma, each time being laid upon its back, it spouted up the milk as from a fountain (I imagine,—being dark, I only felt it)—then snore, snore, snore—quack, quack,—a caricature of an old man in an asthma. I never attempted to sleep till after breakfast, at Coventry; for, shortly afterwards, we got rid of mother and child, to my great delight. I made up for it last night, having slept twelve hours.

The vessel for which I hurried here is out of repair; but I am lucky to have found, as a substitute, the very finest of them all,—the St. George. She lands at Dunleary, close to Seapoint, where I am *expected*. I found a letter waiting for me from Elder, saying he had prepared for me there, much to my satisfaction; I shall, therefore, have him constantly for my companion, and I do not wish a better. I shall avoid by this means all intruders in the way of *callers*, petitioners, *orderly* people, &c.; and as I have no rehearsals, and play but three times a week, I shall want only fine weather to make myself comfortable, for the situation is divine.

C. MATHEWS.

My husband could not patiently sit out a morning visit. He never took up anybody's time in this way, or what is termed *called* upon his most intimate friend. On such occasions in his own house, if he *was caught*, as he called it, by mere idlers, he would sit silent during their stay, leaving them upon my hands, unless directly appealed to; for he had no *small talk*, neither could he tolerate common-place, nor had he an

ear for useless unprofitable remarks, and a *truism* almost *offended him.* Yet he loved trifling upon occasions, and indulged in it most amusingly. Newsmongers did not recommend themselves to him; scandal he disdained, and would not listen to; for he literally closed his hearing on the very first hint of it, by turning his face away, and, unperceived by the *vendor,* placing his fingers against the portals of his ears. This he did during vehement and causeless laughter. An angry voice, or a *cough,* was acutely felt by that delicate, and, in his case, painfully fastidious organ.

Yet *bored* as he felt, and sullen as he appeared with such visiters during their stay, the moment he saw them departing, his good-nature and innate sense of propriety prevailed over personal inconvenience; and he would suddenly relent and invariably follow them into the hall, and begin a sort of conversation, detaining them in the most agreeable manner, even against his own wish, from the dread of having hurt their feelings by his neglect during their visit.

When we removed to London, the space between the entrance to the interior of the house being so much shorter than from the gate to the porch of the cottage, people were apt to surprise him sometimes before he could say nay. This disconcerted him during the whole morning. After some time, I caused a middle door to be placed in the hall, intercepting his library, and contrived to

have an eyelet hole made in one corner of it, with a piece of plate-glass artfully inserted, so that, when a *bore* knocked at a time positively unwelcome, or inconvenient to listen to his gentle dulness, my husband would peep through the glass, and by *silence* exclude him,—the signal for the servant admitting any person was the tinkle of a little silver bell by Mr. Mathews. By this little stratagem I saved him many an uncomfortable hour, though then I was not aware how vitally important it was for him at this period to be guarded from annoyance.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Dublin, Sept. 29th, 1823.

I arrived at Dunleary early this morning, making the passage in twelve hours and a half, within half an hour of the quickest ever performed. The weather was beautiful and calm, and the voyage delightful. I am settled at Seapoint, with a tilbury and gig, "and all that sort of thing," ready to convey me to Dublin—"and everything in the world." I could not get the whole of my luggage over in one vessel, and should not have got even a part, in the St. George, had I not entreated with uplifted hands and tears in my eyes. I am obliged, therefore, to postpone my appearance until Thursday. The weather is divine, and you know how important that is to me. The view from Seapoint is enchanting. We had *only* two hundred haymakers on board, who kicked up such a bobbery that it was quite a burlesque to attempt sleeping, as all those confessed who tried. I sat up with three or

four choice spirits, and we laughed at their simplicity; but I am no sufferer, thank God! being in such rude health, that "How fat you are!" has been my reception hitherto.

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Seapoint, Oct. 3rd, 1823.

On Tuesday the sports began—my old Dublin tortures. Every house I look at associates — postman — no letter — delay, &c.; so often have I been in suspense here. Pray write often. One single line yesterday, just before I went on the stage, would have set me up for the night.

I opened last night, and with great success. My reception equal to the English Opera first night. The Whist Song, a *great* hit; "Crooskeen-lawn," encored, and every Irish joke received with roars. This shows great good-nature and liberality certainly. I trembled for the Whist Song,* and it was one of the most effective things. Everything went off well.

C. MATHEWS.

* The whole of which he gave in a variety of brogues.—A. M.

CHAPTER XIX.

Mr. Mathews's Reluctance to give Offence in his Representation of American Character.—Letter on this Subject from Mr. James Smith.—Letters to Mrs. Mathews: Irish Anecdotes: Danger of Suffocation: Arrival in Wales: Thurtell, the Murderer.—Invitation to Oxford.—Letters to Mrs. Mathews: Sadler the Æronaut.—Letter from Sir John Carr to Mr. Mathews: last Moments of Bellingham, the Murderer.—Mr. Mathews's new Entertainment, the "Trip to America."—Account of the Performance.—Motives of the present Biographer for preserving the Public Records of Mr. Mathews's "Table Performances."

If no other evidence of Mr. Mathews's consideration respecting his forthcoming representation of American character had been manifest, the following letter, in reply to his reluctance to give offence, and his anxiety to bestow praise, would be sufficient to convince the Americans how tenderly scrupulous my husband felt of any mention that might be distasteful to the country which had so recently treated him with kindness and attention. Mr. Smith's letter was dictated by a business-like view of the subject, unallied to the remotest prejudice on his own part, or a desire

to encourage it in others. As the author of the Entertainment, he was naturally anxious to seize upon those incidents and characteristics best suited to interest and entertain, and he thought it fair to proceed as he had previously done, when his own country and countrymen were the subjects.

TO C. MATHEWS, ESQ.

DEAR MATHEWS, Oct. 4th, 1823.

I think "General Jackson" will be *a hit*. Your Anglo-Gallic will come well into play, and "Malbrook" is a taking air. In the introduction, where you end by saying, "A hundred verses, of which I unfortunately only retain ten," say, "unfortunately (or perhaps I should say *fortunately*")* This self-humility will cause you to be exalted. I cannot agree with you as to the necessity of complimenting the Americans. "The theatre," says Puff, in the Critic, "might be made an admirable school of morality; at present, however, I am sorry to say, people go there chiefly for their diversion." In like manner, the town comes to "Mathews at Home" for a laugh—*at* him, if he fail, and *with* him if he succeed. I have no objection, however, to a complimentary final speech: something like this: — "May nothing separate England and America but the billows of the Atlantic." That will be going off with a bounce. Your having been hospitably

* "General Jackson." In allusion to a ludicrous and almost interminable song, sung by a Frenchman in America in praise of General Jackson, which Mr. Mathews had forwarded to Mr. Smith to amuse him, and of which he introduced a portion in the "Trip to America."—A. M.

received in America is nothing to me, and worse than nothing to the audience. You may have a private reason of your own, why two and two should make six, but they will only make four, notwithstanding (*Johnson!*).

And now, my good fellow, I will quote to you a case in point. Last Saturday I dined at the Beefsteak Club. Charles Morris has a song quizzing the Yankees, to the tune of "Yankee Doodle." He was asked to sing it. To this he objected thus: — "Oh no, my dear boys, anything else. It won't be safe."—"Why not safe?"— "Why, although at my age, it is not very likely that I shall ever revisit America, yet, if I should, were my singing that song to get wind, the President might make America decidedly uncomfortable to me." We all took our oaths not to betray him. Whereupon, pointing up to a motto from Horace, suspended over the fire-place, and ejaculating "Fides inter amicos," with a mysterious air, he started off with his song. On the following day I met Washington Irving, and most treacherously divulged to him the whole transaction, adding these words: "Now, pray don't tell this to the President of the United States; for, if you should, he would make America devilish uncomfortable to Charles Morris."—"No, I won't," was his humane considerate reply.

Yours very truly,

JAMES SMITH.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Seapoint, Oct. 15th, 1823.

As there is no post to-morrow, I write a few lines to say, I am quite well; never better; and all is well.

A little *bit* of Irish: — I desired to be called yesterday morning. I was not obeyed. The man who waits on

Elder and me was taken to task for it. He said, "I came into your room, sirr; but you were asleep, and so I did not call you."—"If I had been awake you would, then?"—"I should, sirr."

Epitaph on a child six weeks old:—

"I wonder what I was begun for,
Since I was so soon done for."

I rejoice to hear you are going on so well in planting. "God prosper you, *ma'am*, in your *endeaviours*." My houses keep up to the mark. I get from 50*l.* to 70*l.* per night. The "Polly Packet" a greater hit than the other. *Daniel O'Rourke*, an uproarious favourite. "Disperse," a screech. Indeed, I have every reason to be more than flattered, after Catalani's prodigious haul.

A lady here has a *Dow Buckinghamish* sort of *beard*. A gentleman to-day said, "It would be indelicate to mention it, though somebody ought to tell her of it. I think I'll send her an anonymous razor." The same lady was rather gummy about the ankles. The man observed, "She has patent heels, to keep the dust out of her shoes," &c.

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Seapoint, Oct. 20, 1823.

I wish you would write a line to James Smith, and ask if he received the packet I sent him when he was at Mr. Hope's, and when I may expect some, for my anticipations as to the Entertainment begin to be alarming. In former times, I have been perfect in three or four songs by the month of November. I dined yesterday with Lord Combermere, who has a house at Monkstown.

We had a great laugh over the old story of Major Johnson, and the bishop and the lion. I had a very pleasant day — quite comfortable. Show me a bedroom, I 'll swear to peoples' habits who have furnished it.

I made an angry reply to a beggar-woman to-day: — "I have no money."—"Good luck to you, leave us a lock of your hair." Adieu!

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Dublin, Oct. 21st, 1823.

I am *beautifully* well. Such divine weather I have never seen for so many days together in my life. I need not comment on the news about Mitford.*

Houses keep up to the average I sent you, and everything is right. I am in robust health, and, for me, good spirits. Am rather fatigued with avoiding invitations, but am stout. I wander daily from four to five hours alone, and revel in the solitude I so much prefer to talking. I have hired a chariot for my play-nights. I seldom come home alone. Last night a party of twelve of the boarders went to the theatre, and returned to supper, very jolly, quite in my way. Then I *can* talk, because I ought not, I suppose. A Galway gentleman here said, "I shall go into the 32nd regiment; I shall be nearer my brother, who is in the 31st."

The following is a fact: — The present sheriff at his dinner, when somebody proposed the Duke of Wellington's health—"The First Captain of the Age"— actually gave out "The First *Chaplain* of the Age!" He is a cutler, and when his health was proposed, a wag whispered to the

* Another of his *honourable* debtors.—A. M.

band, who had played appropriate tunes to the other toasts, to play "Terry heigho the *Grinder!*" which was done! — The King shook hands with a peasant, when he was here, who said, "I'll not wash that hand, for a twelve-month."— One little bit at parting: — A drunken fellow taken home by his friend, was challenged by another: "Who is that? Where are you going?" &c. "Why, I think your friend has had too much?"—"Why, I think he had better have divided it fairly, half to-day and half to-morrow." A watchman came up. "How much has he drunk?" said a by-stander. "A gallon at laste!"— "Then I take him into custody for carrying off a gallon of liquor without a *permit!*"

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Liverpool, Nov. 4th, 1823.

As there are perils by land, as well as by sea, I think it is proper, right, respectful, and dutiful, to inform you of my safe arrival here, after a very narrow escape from smothering. Don't be alarmed, — only from human breaths. With three such brutes never did man travel! There was no possibility of getting a breath of air, but by quarrelling. Not even the common-place politeness of a coach-traveller was practised: "*Would it be agreeable to have this window up?*" No, up it went! I watched them to sleep, *stole* it down. In a few minutes, up! — and down again; and so on, without a word. Three great hulking rascals too, and afraid of cold, pretty dears! All Lancashire men of commerce! I could make no impression. At last, when we stopped to change horses, I engaged an Irishman, who had been a

brother in affliction in the packet with me, and an outside passenger, to break the window with his heel, which I paid for; and thus I arrived alive. If I can judge of physiognomy, which I had the opportunity of studying at breakfast, at Chester, I was suspected. I determined to put it out of all doubt before we parted; and when I was no longer doomed to keep *company*, in the boat crossing the Mersey, I asked the guard the price of the glass, and paid for it, to the utter amazement of the calico-printers. The faces of the party would have been a subject for Wilkie; particularly the Irishman and the guard, who evidently had a perception of the humorous.

I was too much elated upon my landing, after such horrors, and the sight of the dear little Welsh hats, and the clean faces, and the *comfortable* appearance of a wretched Welsh town, and mixing with inhabitants where murder is unknown! to think of expressing anything but pleasure at being safe; I therefore forgot to announce the receipt of this renowned manuscript, this mysterious American packet, which has made more noise than ever stupid negro song created before; for it is literally nothing else. It is the mountain and the mouse. I don't know which was the greatest ass, the man who wrote it, or the man that sent it. It would not have been tolerable without the excitement of three weeks' expectation and suspense, but with it, the reading was an absolute affliction. But no matter, let that end.

I arrived here this morning, after fifteen hours, from Holyhead. It would not have suited my poor little trembling wife. Three ferries had I to cross to *avoid Parkgate*, — three of them! and two in the dark; first, Bangor, then Conway, and then the Mersey. Luckily, the weather was very fine. In wet weather I have no

notion of so miserable a journey, as that must be. I got here at seven o'clock, none the worse, thank God! I can say no more on the Mitford business than I did before. Here's human nature! 'What a piece of work is man! How villainous in conception! how deformed in all his propensities! how base to his fellow man! how doubly base to woman!

This is a drunken-looking letter on reading it over; but four hours' sleep have not recovered me, strong as I am, from the last four days' real fatigue and anxiety. I am *ferry* tired. God love and preserve my dearest wife for her affectionate husband,

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Liverpool, Nov. 5th, 1823.

I have been at rehearsal all the morning, and have asked my old Cruet of Cayenne * to dine with me, as the only time, by good luck, I can see him. I am very perfect; so are all the performers. I have nothing on my mind; and therefore I shall "sit," † and with good humour. Indeed, after the responsibility of twelve performances, all on my own shoulders, acting *Morbleu* or *Feignwell* is like slippers after tight boots. I really like a bit of acting by way of change, and the different aspect of all about me here. The horses, the saw-dust, the brogue, I heard the last two days in the Dublin theatre, the wretched appear-

* One of the names he gave to Mr. Ryley, the "Itinerant."

† This is a quotation from Mr. Curran's speech to him in 1811, which Mr. Mathews afterwards applied to anything that he considered a *task*. Mr. Ryley was apt to be garrulous.—A. M.

ance of all about that royal stable, make me enjoy myself so, you can't think.

I read the account of the murder on Sunday last; I had the additional shock of knowing the murderer,—not quite intimately, but I might, if I had liked. I knew his father, who is an alderman at Norwich; and when I was there last, I could hardly keep John Thurtell out of my inn or my dressing-room; but all his conversation was in the fancy line, and I avoided him. I am told the disclosure of the plot since is more horrible than all the rest.

I finish here on Wednesday next, and then for "home and wife," for, I hope, eight months. You did get my "vexed feelings" about the manuscript. I really wish it had been lost, for I had philosophized about it; but such despicable trash! out of which I cannot extract one joke to set all Dublin Castle in an uproar, and annoy you, as I must have done, was too much.

I have "sat" since I wrote the above, and the artist has left me; but *I* took the portrait. *Poor Triste!* * "So, you *will* act! Ha! I saw it growing upon you, when you were here last. Why give up your own profession?† You degrade yourself! Well, I wish I could do what you can; I 'd see the managers at the devil. There she sat," (meaning his deceased wife)—"I 've her miniature in my pocket. Do you smoke? Ah! I love porter. You are a lucky fellow; but I promised not to croak. I place the two chairs by me at Parkgate that supported her coffin; then I go and drink with the farmers. Ah! you 're a queer fellow—you don't like society—my monkey, too, is dead since I saw you—the greatest beauty!—always keep the miniature—it shall be buried with me."—"*What! the*

* Mr. Ryley again.—A. M.

† Meaning his "At Home."—A. M.

monkey?"—"No, no; how can you joke on such a subject? I love monkeys; they are better than half mankind. ——— is a monkey, but not so good;—I mean as Anne, poor soul! I wish I had a segar; but it would annoy you. God bless you—you are rich—give my love to your little woman." "I have long given her all mine," said—

C. MATHEWS (*exit Triste.*)

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Liverpool, Nov. 13th, 1823.*

In my last I forgot to acknowledge the receipt of the packet from Smith. You may say to him I approve, as far as it goes, and that the artist's name is Rembrandt Peel, who painted the portrait.† Stewart, Jarvis, and Sully, are the other most celebrated—the former (Stewart) at the head. Appoint as early a day as convenient to him to come to Highgate. In the mean time, let him pursue the notion he has already got of the silly wonder expressed by Europeans at finding the Americans without wings. It is the happiest mode of showing up prejudices without offending either nation.

My rehearsals take up so much of my time that I have hardly leisure to be in the air, and very little for writing, as I am afraid you will perceive. However, *your* two last are quickly answered. I am all impatience now till I step into the mail, with such prospects before me! I have never felt so satisfied with my lot, or so cheerful in my mind regarding the future, as I have done since my return from America. I am stronger than ever; and the advan-

* This letter will furnish additional evidence of the writer's genuine feelings about America.—A. M.

† A portrait of my husband, painted in America.—A. M.

tages our dear boy has had thrust upon him, solace me under all the minor annoyances of life that have hitherto upset me. Grateful feelings to Providence for such blessings have been uppermost in my mind, and in moments of great depression I do not think as I used to do of those miseries which are past and beyond remedy. On Friday evening, please God! I shall be at the Wellington, where you took leave of me. Let David meet me there. I shall have only one portmanteau. He had better inquire in the morning what hour exactly the Liverpool mail arrives, as my information here may be incorrect.

C. MATHEWS.

It will appear from the following letter that Mr. Mathews was induced to stop on his way home at Oxford, in consequence of a letter from a friend there, to whom he writes in reply as follows.

Liverpool, Nov. 14th, 1823.

Mrs. Mathews has forwarded me your kind letter; and, although I had resolutely (as I thought) determined to "take mine ease" at my cottage until March, I cannot resist your invitation to Oxford. If the Mayor will give me the hall, why, only my permission is wanting, and I grant it. I permit myself to appear "At Home" at Oxford. Now, as it is not much out of my way to London from hence, and as I think it necessary to make some arrangements, and ask some few questions, I shall contrive to get to Woodstock or Oxford on Saturday evening. If you will let me hear you preach on Sunday, and give me a dinner, so be it.

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Handborough, Nov. 17th, 1823.

I arrived here at seven yesterday evening, having *basked* outside the coach from Birmingham all day. That brilliant beloved sun! that gladdened me on the road, did not deign to shine at Oxford. I have been to hear my old schoolfellow preach,* and was much pleased with him. He is a very good and impressive reader. He vows you shall come with me, and Aunty says so too. I have kept off for you as you told me, and made some excuses. Speidell desires kindest love and regards, and so does *eighty-one!*

Sadler, the aeronaut, travelled with me from Liverpool. At Wolverhampton a man got from the top of the coach, and said mysteriously taking me on one side, "Mr. Mathus, do you know wha's 'at inside o't coach?"—"No."—"Why, Sadler, the *Aurora*." Fact!

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Oxford, Nov. 18th, 1823.

I leave Oxford to-morrow morning, and shall be at the Gloucester Warehouse in Oxford Street, corner of Park Street, at four o'clock. Tell David to meet me there with the carriage; and dine at the most convenient hour to yourself.

The affair here is not yet settled, though, I think, well *en train;* but of this I am quite satisfied, that without a personal canvass I should not have got a vote. There is an order in council, that is, the shopkeepers of the village, to refuse the Town Hall for all public performances,

* The Rev. Thomas Speidell.—A. M.

players, tumblers, conjurers, &c. This I have been told before. However, I won over the mayor (a *gentleman*, a banker), and a *ci-devant* mayor, and two or three aldermen. They cannot meet soon enough for me to-morrow, and I will not wait their decision. But I really think I shall succeed notwithstanding the doubts and fears of *Alderman Brownstout* and *Mr. Deputy Sweetbread*, whose partner, Mr. Cleaver, is a Methodist. I have walked about five miles, I guess, without sitting down once, and my poor little Speidell, who never left my elbow, is more tired than I am. And now, farewell! till we meet to-morrow, which I pray we may in health and spirits. If you are as happy as I am at the prospect, we are two very happy people. God bless you!

Affectionately yours, C. MATHEWS.

About this period Mr. Mathews received the following letter from Sir John Carr, which may be found interesting, as relating to a remarkable and mournful public event:—

TO C. MATHEWS, ESQ.

DEAR MATHEWS, New Norfolk Street, Park Lane.

I have the pleasure of sending for your autographical collection, a letter written by Bellingham,* who was executed, as you may recollect, for the murder of Mr. Perceval. It was addressed to Bellingham's wife, the night before he suffered, and is in pencil, pen and ink not being allowed. A brief detail of the circumstances under which I became possessed of it may, perhaps, be interesting.

* This letter was sold amongst my husband's collection of autographs, since his death.—A. M.

Conceiving, but, as it proved, in error, that I had seen Bellingham in Russia, in an insane state, I visited him in Newgate a short time preceding his trial, as I afterwards did on the morning of his execution; and being acquainted with one of the sisters of Mrs. Perceval, I was desirous of ascertaining whether he had been incited to the deplorable deed by any political animosity, or by the instigation of any one. Upon my addressing him on these points, he solemnly denied all feelings of enmity or influence, and appeared to exult with conscientious pride in having solely achieved what he emphatically called "the melancholy catastrophe," declaring at the same time, that after many unavailing efforts, the only mode he had of getting his commercial accounts in Russia adjusted was, by putting an end to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He also added his hope, that this melancholy catastrophe would be a warning to future ministers not to suffer persons who had unsettled accounts to waste their time and patience, as he had been obliged to do, by fruitless applications to secretaries and clerks in public offices. Upon other topics he was perfectly rational.

The figure of this man was tall and well-proportioned; his countenance expressed intelligence, and great irritability. On the morning of his execution, of a large concourse of persons admitted into the press-yard, I only (the lord-mayor, sheriffs, and usual attendants excepted) was permitted to remain in the room (for the condemned) adjoining. Whilst the executioner was securing his hands and arms in the manner usual on such occasions, some of these persons were incessantly pressing him with questions regarding his religious convictions, to which he listened with placid composure and perfect self-possession, and replied with so much clearness and good sense, as showed that he had well considered the subject. During part of

this conversation he turned to me, and requested that his regret and condolence might be communicated to Mrs. Perceval, but he at the same time persisted in the justice and necessity of the deed he had done. The Ordinary told me, that in the act of again expressing his approval of "the catastrophe," and that he had no other mode of getting his accounts settled, the drop fell. After the execution, a gentleman belonging to one of the evening papers importuned me for a statement of all that had passed in the room before mentioned, which I gave him; and some time after, as a small proof of the sense of the benefit his paper had derived from it, he sent me this letter of Bellingham's, which he had purchased of the gaoler who attended him. Upon my expressing a wish to forward it to Mrs. Bellingham, he assured me that a copy of it had been sent to her, as well as published in many of the papers; that she and her late husband had long lived upon very bad terms, although he had so affectionately addressed her, and that if I took the trouble of sending the original to her, he was convinced it would not be valued. I remain, dear Mathews,

Very truly yours,

JOHN CARR.

The succeeding letter will show, that although an ardent collector, Mr. Mathews was not a churl, when he was requested to enrich the collection of another of similar taste.

TO W. UPCOTT, ESQ.

MY DEAR SIR,

Pray accept an apology for any apparent rudeness to you in slighting your friendly letter, but the fact is, it

slipped my memory, and the truth is best at all times. You will not think it very surprising that a memory kept on the full stretch, as mine is necessarily in my profession, should be occasionally treacherous in matters not relating to it. I shall be most happy to contribute to your collection of autographs, if in my power, without fee or reward. It is, in my mind, a highly interesting pursuit, and it will afford me great pleasure to encourage a brother collector. I hope you will do me the favour to look over my series of theatrical portraits, paintings, and drawings, and that you will consider this as a free admission whenever it may suit your convenience.

Dear sir, yours very truly,

C. MATHEWS.

On March 25th Mr. Mathews performed his new Entertainment at the English Opera-house, called, as the bill of the night will show, his

TRIP TO AMERICA.

PART I. — Exordium.—Tourists.—Embarking on Board the *William Thompson.* — Speaking Trumpet. — Whimsical Coincidence of Names. — Yellow Fever. — In Sight of New York.— Land at Hoboken.—New Brunswick.—English Importations.— Jack Topham and his Cousin Bray. — Waterloo Hotel, Liverpool, contrasted with Washington Hotel, Elizabeth Town. — American Phrases expounded.—Cool Landlord.—Hot Wine.— Arrival at Bristol (in America). — First Appearance at Baltimore.—Philadelphia.—Steam-boat and Stage-coach Characters. —Arrival at New York.

Song—*Mrs. Bradish's Boarding House.*

More Characters. — American Fun. — Mr. Raventop, the American Jester. — Major Grimstone, "*very well.*"— Mr. Pennington.—American Strictures on English Tourists. — War.— Public Dinner.—General Jackson.—French Poet Laureat.

The MATHEW-ORAMA for 1824 or

Pretty considerable d_d particular Til Bits from America being all well at Natchitoches.

Big Mr Farren do!?

Barnaby Brar
ha ha ha
what a clever
fellow that Jack
is the Boy'll be
the death o'me
he will
ha ha ha

Jack Tarpaun
Well you Yankey
did it look as I
thought you was
Ball? Da' his'n is no
you ever see a
man you know
you always sail
y' Manners at
least I know you

Jonathan W
Doolittle
a real Yankee
I guess I'll get a tailor
my self when I
Mungle Wurtle
Pickle Pluto Bon
would you see that
Brute he cant me

Mr Pennington
Gentleman on
British Principles
to Jonathan
Landlord
Most former to
calculate its just
as well & pick
dinner I believe etc
all Mar Pilk hats
Sinal are well
I'll see what I can do for ye

Another particularly Cool
Landlord
Who are you?
Where do you
come from?
How long are
you stay with the K.
all Mar Pilk hats Where are you
Sinal are well going?
I'll see what I can do for ye

Major
Grimstone
Very Well
Very Well
Very Well

Judge Dubree to
a Suit
Now gentlemen
what I have
to say
is very short
I have one
more
witness to
hear
& then
we will
sum up
the
evidence
& I dare
say
we shall
not be
long
before we
return a
Verdict
more than
one hour

Miss
Mungle Wurtle
to Double
Heroine
Well I never
saw such
a thing
in all
my born
days
I'm treated
by Lovers

Colonel Thorn
Eagle
to Captain Double
water at the
Bayou Bartholo
Pluto Bayou all
Mister we
present for
Gentlemen
that Gen
Jackson
Gen Washington
Gen Lafayette
Gen Bolivar
Gen Morgan
Gen Pinckney
Gen Hamilton
Gen Clinton
Gen Jefferson
Gen Madison
Gen Monroe
Gen Adams
Gen

Song—*Ode to General Jackson.*

American Army. — Irregular Regulars. — Muskets and Umbrellas.

Song—*Militia Muster Folk.*

PART II.— African Theatre.—Black Tragedian, "*To be, or not to be!*"

Song—*Opossum up a Gum Tree;* real negro melody.

Definition of the word *Yankee.*—Jack Topham on the Natives.—Arrival at Boston.—Bunker's Hill.—A REAL Yankee, Jonathan W. Doubikin, and his Uncle Ben.—John and Jonathan on "*I guess,*" and "*You know.*"—Mons. Mallet.—Election.

Song—*Boston Post Office.*

Providence. — Enticements for Mr. Mathews to perform.—Court of Justice.— Charge to the Jury.— Emigration discouraged by a British Farmer.— Disabled Goods and Chattles.

Song—*Illinois Inventory.*

Maximilian the Nigger (*Anglice,* Negro,) and the Snuffbox. —Preparations to depart.—Farewell Finale.

PART III.—A Monopolylogue, called

ALL WELL AT NACHITOCHES!

Colonel Hiram Peglar, a Kentucky Shoemaker.
Agamemnon, a poor runaway Negro.
Jonathan W. Doubikin, a real Yankee (his master.)
Monsieur Capote, a French Emigrant Tailor.
Mr. O'Sullivan, an Irish Improver of his Fortune.

*** All the Characters of the Entertainment to be represented by Mr. Mathews.

The following will convey the pith of the various accounts of this Entertainment published at the time.

Mr. Mathews, in his late trip to America, has not failed to catch many of the leading characteristics of *Jonathan,*

for the amusement of his friend *John*. He commences his "Lecture" on the peculiarities, characters, and manners he has seen during his late trans-Atlantic trip, by observing, that the same motive which induced Columbus to quit his native shores, also impelled him to undertake this voyage—the "*auri sacra fames*." After a ludicrous account of his embarking on board the *William Thompson*, and an introduction to his friends *Jack Tapham* and his *Cousin Bray*, the former a determined punster, and the latter an enthusiastic admirer of his relation's wit, we become acquainted with an American landlord, the coolness of whose temper, and the heat of whose wine, form a curious contrast to the ready accommodation of an English house of reception. This phlegmatic host is described to have had curiosity in his eye, and a segar in his mouth. He gets dinner for nobody who comes after his usual hour, and treats his customers as if they were soliciting a favour rather than conferring a benefit. The port-wine is mistaken by *Jack* for "mulled Day and Martin," and the other parts of the Entertainment, which were procured with so much difficulty, were equally doubtful to the well-practised taste of a Londoner.

At Baltimore Mr. Mathews meets with so much kindness and hospitality that he was inclined to think himself "at home." He regrets that tourists, who satirise the places they visit with so much asperity, should not first examine their own capabilities of enjoyment before they deal so harshly with those whose kindness deserves a better return, than the unmerited disgust which has sometimes been excited against them, by those who carried discontent in their own breasts, and were predetermined to be displeased with everything. On board the steam-packet, which transports our hero to Philadelphia, an Irishman, who has never yet set eyes on a turtle, and is as

little acquainted with its appearance as its taste, is anxious to know whether those on board are "real or mock turtle." The roads in America, it appears, have not yet been improved by that Colossus in the art of road-making, Mr. M'Adam; and upon the sensitive traveller no trifling pain is inflicted during his transportations in those moving dungeons the American stage-coaches.

To follow Mr. Mathews during the whole of his eccentric career would be impossible. We must pass over much accurate delineation of national manner, and many happy descriptions of individual character. At the latter end of the Second Part we have a description of a "charge to a grand-jury" by an American judge, of the most ludicrous nature. Among other learned definitions which this legal prodigy lays down to the jurymen, is, that bigamy is constituted by a man marrying two wives, and polygamy by a woman marrying more than two husbands.

Part the Third contains a monopolylogue, called "All Well at Natchitoches!" in which Mr. Mathews represents six characters with wonderful ability and adroitness. In the course of the entertainment we were furnished with many highly amusing sketches of American character and independence. Mr. Mathews, however, never deals harshly either with the national manners or individual peculiarities, and takes every opportunity of doing justice to the good fellowship with which he was treated. Mr. Mathews's trip will, no doubt, prove equally attractive with his former amusements, and draw, whenever he is "At Home," a crowded audience. We should observe, that all the characters of the evening's entertainment are represented by Mr. Mathews, with the exception of that of a *live pony*, which is merely introduced because he is wanted to *draw*.

The picture of a French emigrant, a *Monsieur Mallet*, was a powerful piece of acting. We never beheld anything more complete, masterly, and affecting. Poor *Mallet* anxiously expected a letter at the Boston post-office from his family; and though it was there all the time of his numerous inquiries, he did not receive it for weeks, owing to the French pronunciation of his name, *Mallay*. "Had you said Mall*et*," coolly replied the Republican, "I should have known." The varied emotions of the Frenchman — joy at having received the letter, and rage against the office-keeper for detaining it, during the expression of which he unconsciously tears the unread letter to tatters — were vigorously portrayed. The whole of this episode was perhaps, the ablest piece of acting in the production.*

We "guess" that we may "calculate" on a "pretty considerable" intermingling in our conversations of the American *colloquialisms* and *idioms*.

I have previously explained my reasons for introducing some of the numerous criticisms published upon Mr. Mathews's acting. It may probably be considered by some, that in recording my husband's Table-performances I have been too diffuse, but I have been so purposely, from a desire that his peculiar faculties, and the nature of the vehicles which conveyed them to the public,

* An Irish critic observed upon this episode that "if Sterne had written it he would have selected Mathews to represent it," adding, that "it was intensely affecting, and the more affecting from the glare of humour, and joke, and merriment, with which this deep shade of tragedy was surrounded."—A. M.

may be preserved for future information. When all personal recollections of him and his excellencies have passed away, it may not unnaturally be asked by those who have only heard of such a man, "What did he do? What was the form and character of his performances? Where may a description of '*Mr. Mathews at Home*' be found?" Nay, the very title may become obsolete in fashion's dictionary, as its predecessors, "Drum," and "Rout," are now; and in another twenty years the present "At Home" of a fine lady may have given place to some newer form of invitation to a crowded room.

The Lectures of George Alexander Stevens, and similar exhibiters in by-gone days, leave little memory of what they were. A small volume of "Lectures on Heads" is to be found; but they give no definite idea of the man who delivered them, or his capacities — the *matter* remains, but how was it animated and rendered interesting? Of this no account is left that I have heard of. Stevens is spoken of as a *lecturer* — celebrated as such; but no one knows how deservedly, for his critics were not numerous or elaborate in their notices: nor is any authority extant, I believe, to appeal to, for the general style or peculiar method of delivering these lectures. The words alone remain, and they do not, I think, fully satisfy the reader that the reciter of them required any very superior genius, humour, or variety. Mr. Dib-

din's "*Sans Souci*," (though of a much later date,) is also but *a name*; and but for his excellent songs, written in the days of our naval victories, his title as a lecturer would have been now extinct.

I may express myself ignorantly, perhaps; but I have some reason for believing that no person, (not even Foote and his "*Tea*,") ever received so many "notices," as Mr. Mathews. He has fortunately lived in an age when superior men have not refused to employ their pens in criticisms on dramatic genius; and I am proud to assert, that there has not existed a case of such harmonious agreement of opinion as in that of my husband. In the many hundred articles now in my possession, written by as many hands, (and I do not, I believe, possess half that has been published in his praise,) there does not occur an instance of depreciation, where the critic is manifestly a person qualified to pronounce upon another's merits; there is, in fact, a sort of freemasonry in genius, and a *brother* is known at once and acknowledged accordingly. I would not that the "At Homes" of Charles Mathews should altogether pass into a name. They need not; and it is my aim to preserve some features of his performances, although they must be lifeless, that they may convey interest and information to future inquirers as to their nature and effect; with the aid of such graphic descriptions as have been given by his gifted contemporaries,

upon the mode in which they were animated by *him* whose plastic power could model even old forms anew, and warm them into spirit and motion.

There is another reason why some of these criticisms should be preserved in a somewhat collected form. It is quite impossible that Mr. Mathews's entire entertainments can ever appear in print. *They never have been published,* and I am not sure that it would be fair to the gifted authors who contributed to them to put them forth in their disjointed state, being imperfect as they were written down by the reciter of them. The extraordinary links, which his genius supplied, holding the whole together, are wanting. These entertainments were not only written *for* him, but *to* him; and may not be inaptly likened to the fairy-formed slipper of Cinderella, which, though symmetrical in itself, and brilliant and lucid in its quality, proved unfitting and useless to all but the original wearer.

Moreover, amongst the particulars left in my husband's handwriting, where anecdotes, characters, and observations of his own, drawn from nature, and entrusted to memory, were to be introduced, *the page presents only a blank!* Where his mind illuminated the subject, there appears a dreary space. Here and there, indeed, a brief note may be found in the margin of what charac-

ter he intended to introduce — no more.* Such blanks speak volumes to my mourning heart while I look upon them, and say more to me than I can express, of a loss irreparable in every sense! †

* Such as, "Here —— *ad libitum.*"

† In a letter written by my husband, dated January 27th, 1832, will be found a corroboration of these assertions.

CHAPTER XX.

Letter from the Right Honourable J. W. Croker to Mr. Mathews. — Letter to Mr. Mathews from Mr. John Bannister. — Letter to Mrs. Mathews: Disturbance at the Dublin Theatre. — Mr. Talbot's Attempts to thwart the Success of Mr. Mathews. — Letters to Mrs. Mathews: Passage to Ireland. — Letter from Mr. Peake to Mr. Mathews: "Mathews's Mems.:" Anecdote: Dr. Kitchiner and the Rival Managers: Thomas Hood: an Act of Charity: the Conjurer Gyngell: Sir George Smart, and the Lightning.—Letters to Mrs. Mathews: the Picture Gallery: Hoax upon Mr. Abbot. — Count Boruwlaski's Letters to Mrs. Mathews, and Mr. C. J. Mathews. — Unlucky Speculations of Mr. Mathews. — Letters to Mrs. Mathews: Effect of the Hoax upon Mr. Abbot: Mr. Mathews's Reception in Liverpool: Letter from Mr. Abbot to Mr. Mathews.—Retaliation.

EARLY in the year 1824, a new club-house was formed, called the Athenæum, and Mr. Mathews became a member of it, through the following complimentary medium.

TO C. MATHEWS, ESQ.

DEAR SIR, Admiralty, 23d March, 1824.

At a meeting of the New Literary and Scientific Club, held yesterday, I did myself the honour of proposing you

as a member of that institution; and I was unanimously authorized to acquaint you, that the Club will be most happy if you should be inclined to join our society. I enclose you a prospectus and list of the names of our present members, and have the honour to be,

Your faithful humble servant,

J. W. CROKER.

I give a specimen of the style in which Mr. Bannister generally wrote to my husband.

TO C. MATHEWS, ESQ.

INCOMPARABLE MATHEWS, May 20th, 1824.

Although I have left off acting, I shall have great pleasure in *performing* (my *promise* to dine with you) on the 28th. Ever yours truly,

JNO. BANNISTER.

65, Gower Street.

The following letter, like many others, will explain itself.

TO MR. MILLER.

DEAR MILLER, 1824.

I suppose you "saw by your paper" that my indefatigable friend still honours me by placing me among "The great guns." Do you believe that Thelwall wrote that article? The deliberate falsehoods,—the first calculated to injure me in America; the records as to the failure of songs; and the third, as to the ladies! are too bad. I shall not follow Sir George Collier's example, but I will give 5*l.* to any infirmary or hospital to know the author. Pray

—pray, gratify me by letting me know how I can come at the information.

I *think* you know how sincere I am in my feeling towards the country; and my extreme annoyance is the insinuation, or rather assertion, that no account of them has been so ill-natured or exaggerated as mine. It must be contradicted; but how I know not. Tell Price I am in a great rage. Yours truly,

C. MATHEWS.

What will you give me for a defence of America? I have a conceit that I could do it.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Dublin, Wednesday.

I enclose, per Speaker's frank, some report of my progress. *Tonson* is a great choke-pear. G—y cut me—would Talbot had done the same, or, rather, Mrs. Talbot. I have not time to write full particulars; but the enclosed extract of a paper, marked No. 1, will give you some notion of the disgraceful scene that took place on Monday night. Talbot is the stock *Morbleu*, which he makes a monkey—a ballet-master—in short, a *stage* Frenchman. Mrs. Talbot is the greatest intriguer in the world; you recollect the Limerick plot?

Theatre Royal. — Tuesday evening's entertainment should have concluded with *Monsieur Tonson.* We have often admired Mr. Talbot in the character of *Monsieur Tonson;* and the praises of the London critics had prepared us for being equally delighted and amused by Mr. Mathews. We have been disappointed, — not through any fault of Mr. Mathews, but by the disgraceful conduct

of a few persons in the galleries, who commenced hissing and calling for Talbot as soon as Mathews appeared, although the whole house (with the exception of these few) "applauded him to the very echo." Mr. Mathews felt himself unable to proceed, and retired from the stage. In a few minutes Mr. Farren came forward and said, "Ladies and gentlemen, it is with the greatest reluctance I appear before you; but at the solicitation of Mr. Mathews, I beg to know how he has incurred your displeasure." Several voices called out that the disturbance was caused by some fellows in the middle gallery.

Mr. Mathews then came forward and was received with loud applause; but he had scarcely proceeded twenty lines when the uproar compelled him to leave the stage a second time. Mr. Abbot then came forward, and begged leave to inform the audience that Mr. Mathews had performed the character of *Monsieur Morbleu* with the most decided success in London. He had come here with considerable inconvenience to himself to serve him (Mr. Abbot), and had always been heretofore welcomed by the Dublin audience, which he (Mr. Abbot) could perceive was the case at present, with a very slight exception; but even partial displeasure was so unusual to Mr. Mathews, that he felt himself unable to proceed until it was removed. Mr. Abbot concluded by saying he was certain it proceeded from Mr. Talbot's pretended friends, and that it was most disagreeable to that gentleman.

After this address the piece was suffered to proceed without interruption until the middle of the second act, when the hissing was again resumed. Mr. Mathews then addressed the audience in nearly the following words:—

"Ladies and gentlemen,—I am totally unprepared for such an attack as this, and am therefore incapable of answering it. I had flattered myself that I had played

the character of *Morbleu* in London with some success; and I feel that I shall not at this time of life, supported with the approbation of a London audience, shrink into insignificance at so paltry a show of displeasure. I have always received a most liberal share of support from the Dublin audience. However, if they should now express their disapprobation of me, I shall bow to it with the greatest humility. The only mortification I shall feel is my consequent inability to do justice to the character."

It was destined that, in all Mr. Mathews's engagements in Ireland, something quite apart from public and general feeling, something harassing and irritating to his temper, was to take place, and put him out of humour for the time. The present was a very flagrant case of baseness. It appeared since the early days when the names of Talbot and Mathews were first coupled, that Mr. Talbot had descended from his tragedy stilts "to shuffle about as the lean and slippered pantaloon" of farce. From that time friendship seemed to have subsided in the breast of Mr. Talbot into a foolish attempt at rivalry. In 1808, some "compunctious visitings" of a transient kind induced him, after receiving an undeserved instance of Mr. Mathews's kindness, to address a long letter to him, from which I extract the most material part.

Allow me to express now the pleasure you have afforded me, and the high idea you have *forced* me to conceive of

your heart, by the kindness you have bestowed, and the cordiality you have received me with, after the coolness of my conduct towards you, and the censure and abuse I so liberally bestowed upon you. Not to dwell on a subject which occasions me some feelings of remorse, a letter wherein I thought we were jointly reflected on, by insinuation after our visit to Wales, was the principal cause of my conduct.

Your sincere friend,

MONTAGUE TALBOT.

After this letter, the friends never met until the year 1816, when Mr. Talbot had a *relapse* of his *weakness;* and it followed that, because Mr. Mathews was engaged to perform in Limerick, at the principal theatre, while Mr. Talbot was manager of a minor one, every mean contrivance was resorted to, to injure the receipts of the major establishment (traced to Mr. Talbot) — such as paragraphs asserting the utter want of *safety* in the building, if *crowded,* &c.; and though we had never seen him from the time of the paragraph I have extracted from his letter, and therefore *could* not have offended him, he neither called nor took any notice during our stay in Limerick, but in the manner above described.

The following is Mr. Mathews's account to me of the recent circumstance.

I was attacked with hisses—off!—off!—Talbot!—Talbot!—before I spoke one word. Fellows were taken up all armed with bludgeons. The managers had hints that

something was likely to occur on my opening night; and Abbot and Farren were prepared by anonymous letters for the direct war of Monday night, though *I* was not. It was a painful situation. My pride supported me; nothing ever did brace my nerves and rouse my energies equal to an undeserved hiss.

In the second act I left the stage, with a determination never to set foot on it again. I begged of Abbot to gratify my pride by going on the stage to say that I had withdrawn myself.

The stage was unoccupied for at least ten minutes, during which time I had been firm of purpose. Abbot and Farren both petitioning me to go on. I positively refused; but a cue for the demolition of the chandelier being given, I dreaded further row for Abbot's sake, and therefore repented and rushed on. I never behaved so well to myself.

One part of my speech is too tamely reported in the account of it. I said these exact words:—"If in your judgment I am unqualified to perform the part of *Morbleu*, I must necessarily bow to your decision; but I beg it may be distinctly understood, that having for years been honoured with the approbation of a London audience, no mark of displeasure here can make me shrink into insignificance, and much less the paltry attempts made by a hired party." If I had not been cheered after this as I was, I had arranged another sentence in my mind; I however, conquered. Last night was a very fine house; and the "Trip" was received with acclamations; and my Irishman, which I always contend is not appreciated in London, was my greatest hit of the night. I was huzzaed at the close.

If I have not directed properly to the Speaker you will tell me so. The conspiracy has served me, and my inde-

pendence is applauded by those whose opinions are worth having.

CHARLES MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Seapoint, Oct. 17th, 1824.

I am going on in the same steady course, which will give me about 500*l.* sterling, I expect, clear of all expenses. When I came, my friends all pulled faces, and thought me a "little d—d mad," to come at this period after the greatest drag ever known in Dublin.

Plant away—plant away! A very disagreeable, stiff, vulgar, young woman here, fancying herself quite *illigant*, said the other day, in confidence to another female, "There is not a gintleman in the house. Wait till my brother comes; then they'll see a gintleman." He arrived; and a more unlicked cub I never saw. His gentility consisted entirely in mincing the language which he flattered himself he was speaking with proper nicety:—"It's a favourable *dee* to see the *bee*;—*Weeter*, bring the *tay*." "I went to the *veel* of *Avoca*, and *ate* so much *vale* that my *hid eched*," &c. After two days knowledge of him, the friend said: "Ah! Miss M——, when does your *other* brother come?" Ha! neat.

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Dublin, Dec. 8th, 1824.

It snowed the whole way to Conway Ferry. We turned out of a warm coach, and walked a quarter of a mile to the ferry. Snowing! wet boat! wet feet! wet everything! Trundled in, and tumbled out in fifteen

miles more. Crossed Bangor. More wet boats and boots. Here I brought guard to confession, that the packet did not wait one minute beyond nine for the Chester mail. It was then half-past six instead of three, and we had twenty-three miles to go. I told guard and coachman, that if I was too late for the packet I would bring an action against the proprietors. By galloping, we arrived at five minutes to nine. Six minutes later I should have seen the smoke from the chimney of the steamer scudding from English land, and had twenty-four hours to spend at the World's End. This was my first piece of good fortune. The day was lovely, and I enjoyed my passage much. The next morning it blew a gale, and rained all day.

How extraordinary that the snow did not reach you! It never ceased from the time I awoke on Saturday morning until four on Sunday morning; and here there was skaiting on Sunday. I had not time for breakfast at Holyhead, so by a curious fatality I was thirty-six hours without a meal, and should have been forty but for the sandwiches. It is quite a prejudice that eating is necessary on a journey. Yesterday I walked half a mile before I could find a chemist's; at last I pounced upon one. "Any healing plaister?"—"We have not, surr." Walked to a second; same answer. A third; the same; until I was at a loss to conjecture why I could not be served. I was directed to an apothecary's. Still "*No.*" At last it occurred to me to try a new expedient. "Can you not procure or prepare me some *haleing* plaister?" The mystery was solved: my unfortunate English accent was not to be understood by these illigant Irish spakers.

Ever affectionately, &c.

C. MATHEWS.

TO C. MATHEWS, ESQ.

English Opera House,
Dec. 10th, 1824.

My dear Mathews,

I received your sprightly epistle yesterday, and shall attend to the several requests. You need not apologize to me; "I see by my paper" (your favourite phrase) that the entertainment has been as successful in the country as in London. You ask me, what is to be the subject for next season? Careful bird, to be thus thinking of the nest into which your eggs are to be deposited. But I am sure it will be many seasons before those eggs will be addled.

The extraordinary variety of your conceptions, and the unique powers of conveying them to an audience, would give ample employ to a dozen authors. In regard to the subject: — As the "Youthful days" succeeded so well, we might have a sort of continuation of them under the title of "Mathews's Mems." or, should you like it, to be a little more intelligible, "Mr. Mathews's Memorandum Book." This would prove a good vehicle for all you have collected in your tour, some of your untouched matter, and the rest to be provided by your authors. The "Monopolylogue" is sure to spin out of my brains when they are warmed up to concert pitch by one or two of your admirable readings. They, and the pleasant hospitality of Ivy Cottage, cannot fail to inspire *your Monsieur Scribe*. I am just returned from my annual trip to the sea-side. On the Parade, the first day after our arrival, we met a family with whom we had been formerly slightly acquainted (I must tell you that this family had risen from humble origin to large fortune by means of an extensive manufacture of cordage). Here, woe to us!

our bow of recognition was not returned. My wife was nettled (for she has gentle blood in her veins). "Don't be uneasy," said I, loud enough to be heard by the party; "*they are on the high ropes; don't cut them!*"

I also met that *cantankerous quondam* friend of mine, ——, on the beach, trying to get his bile blown out of him; but all the gales that Boreas could produce from his elemental emporium could not effect that. He was in his accustomed mood, and asked me where was *old Irritable?* the name by which he designated your worship. *He does not know you* — how few do! *I* was aware, that while you were giving gratification to thousands by your unrivalled talent, though excited by the cheerful roars of laughter, and the loud applause of crowded audiences, you were writhing at the same moment with pain so severe as almost to amount to continued torture. How you have been able to bear up against it for so many seasons has proved to me a matter of surprise. Since your first appearance at the Lyceum, in 1818, I have been constantly with you, and may be able to form a just conclusion.

You ask me for news. Am I to skim the papers? You see them all. But if you require a little extra intelligence, it is at your service. There has been a great flood in Northamptonshire, which has of course immersed in water vast numbers of unfortunate sheep. I'll venture to say, that more mutton broth has been made in that county than in any other. I saw Tom Hill yesterday; and I am happy to say that he looks one year younger than when he had the interview with Sir Robert Walpole to give his advice as regarded the rudiments of the education of the hopeful Horatio.

I must tell you a good little bit which occurred a few

days since. The excellent kind-hearted Dr. Kitchiner, in his extreme *bonhommie*, thought that he had hit on the means to reconcile the conflicting interests of the Theatres Royal, Drury Lane, Covent Garden, Haymarket, and English Opera-house (no easy task). To accomplish this desirable object, he invited Messrs. Henry Harris, Elliston, Arnold, and Morris, to dine with him: the latter did not accept the invite. But the Doctor never recollected how seriously the respective managers were at "daggers drawn." When they met in the Doctor's library (the only guests) it was a scene of inconceivable surprise. Harris was perplexed; Elliston assumed an air of infinite grandeur; Arnold had the tact to see the Doctor's well-meant intention, and contrived to meet his powerful opponents with pleasantry. Dinner was served, the Doctor's best, for a small party. Of course, there was some embarrassment with the high contending powers, until Mr. Arnold, breaking the ice, proposed, that the very best thing the rival managers could do, would be to avoid all conversation on theatrical affairs. This was agreed to by all but Kitchiner, who wanted their dramatic differences settled that night at his table; and with this feeling the Doctor continually *interlarded* the discourse in spite of the efforts of his visiters to refrain from attacking each other. The wine circulated (the Doctor's wine, as he gave away much of it, always wanted *keeping*;) Harris and Arnold joked, and avoided all hostile allusions; but Elliston was unable to conceal his patent dignity, and had become rather tipsy. He rose, and placing his hand on Arnold's head, he exclaimed in a pompous manner, "*Minor manager, I will lay my hand on you and crush you!*" This prodigious threat, of course, produced hearty laughter.

I have met at the house of the father of my worthy

colleague, John Hamilton Reynolds, an odd, quaint being, by name Thomas Hood. He appears to be too modest to *let* a pun; but when it is effected, it is capital. On better acquaintance (though he is the most shy cock I ever encountered) I think I perceive under his disguise one of the shrewdest wags of this age. I predict, that before your present authors are worn threadbare he will be your man.*

I inclose you two songs, complete, for the forthcoming entertainment. I like them; I hope you will; if not, there 's more of the *raw material* in the warehouse over my eyebrows. My letter almost assumes the form of a despatch, but will, I trust, reach you in a franked cover from the Home Secretary's office. If his lordship had never to sign his noble name to anything less disagreeable than to "this present writing," being that which *has* sent (as delivered by you), and *will again send* home thousands laughing to their pillows, his lordship would be an envied man.

To your paragraph of "*particularly private*" I reply, that I effected your purpose, and I trust to your wishes. On handing over old R—— the 20*l.* I told him it had been raised by a subscription of his well-wishers, and *lied* according to your directions, in the most discreet manner. What could make the surly fellow imagine that you were his bitterest enemy I cannot divine; perhaps in early days he thought that *he* was the best comedian of the two, and was savage that he never found his way to a London audience. I think it will give you gratification to ascer-

* Mr. Peake proved to have the gift of second sight in this view of the future. One of my husband's most effective entertainments was from the pen of the delightful author here mentioned.—A. M.

tain that this act of yours is a much greater charity than you could have apprehended. The misery of the lodging, the squalid state of the family; and yet the old boy, with the same cynical turn of the nose, asked me rather peremptorily, the names of the *persons* who had subscribed for him. What made you fall in love with such a specimen? As the money was in his hands, I had effected my part of the affair, and left him with a divided feeling of pity and contempt. The wife and daughters exhibited quite a distinct appreciation of the gift. He has, however, since addressed a well-worded letter of thanks to his "unknown friends," which you shall have when you come to town.

Turn we to another subject, as my double sheet is not yet full. I once in a booth saw the conjurer Gyngell performing his various tricks; but he contrived to divide his entertainment into several parts; coming forward before the curtain, bowing to his audience, with this elucidatory address:—"Ladies and gentlemen, the *next* will be *something else!*" so I perforce must go (though no conjurer) to my something else. John Hardwick has composed an elaborate epitaph for his friend Beazley:—

"Here lies Samuel Beazley;
He lived hard, but died easily."*

By the way, when last we met I omitted to relate to you the joke on Sir George Smart. Sir George was dining

* This epitaph is as concise and pithy as that of Mr. T. Dibdin's upon a celebrated book-worm, whose injunction upon his tombstone was facetiously supposed to be as follows:—

"Reader of these four lines take heed,
And mend your life for my sake,
For you must die, like *Isaac Reed*,
Though you *read* till your *eyes ache*."—A. M.

at Bartley's, and during dinner a most tremendous storm of thunder and lightning came on. It was terrific, and Sir George is reported to have laid down his knife and fork in serious alarm. We were not surprised at this, because Sir George (a sensible man) was fully aware that *he was a conductor!*

If this letter should be received since you have heard from home, all are well at Kentish Town, and Miss Sophia Laforest is on a visit with Mrs. Mathews. They are never melancholy when together. Your favourite white pony, I am sorry to inform you (I know not how offended), has kicked your coachman David, who, I 'll be bound to say, returned the compliment; though they are both very fond of each other; but this is in accordance with the way of the world.

Have you not acted *Jonathan in England?* Great difficulty must lie in the effective representation of the other parts; Bartley, Keeley, Sloman, Salter, even Minton, were capital with us. My paper bids me cry "Hold! enough!" but I have still space to tell you, that Wrench has not improved in the only bit of mimicry he attempts, the imitation of the "*Baa of a sick lamb.*" Gods! how we fools laughed at it!* But laughter is very wholesome,

* I am reminded of a ridiculous scene at which Mr. Mathews some years ago was present. He had been in high good humour, and had complied with the well-managed hints of a party of very pleasant noblemen, with whom he dined, and did several things to their very great delight. One of the party, an elderly grave-looking man, the Earl of M—— N——, particularly showed his appreciation of all he had heard by repeated thanks; and, in order to repay in some measure the gratification he had received, offered to give the only imitation he had ever acquired, and immediately, with unaffected seriousness, mimicked the *braying of a donkey* to the very life.—A. M.

and always a delight. I laugh as much as I can. Small room to say, thanks for the cheque on Rowland Stephenson for my (your) bookkeeping for last season. That the same success may ever continue to attend you is, of course, the ardent wish of, my dear Mathews,

Your sincere and faithful friend,

R. B. Peake.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Dublin, Dec. 12th, 1824.

When I wrote last I would not tell my "miseries," as I was suffering under them: I thought it better to wait until they were over. I was advertised to act *Goldfinch* and *Morbleu* on Wednesday. On the day before, I found my baggage had not arrived, and therefore could not come until next day's packet, and consequently could not be delivered until towards evening. I was therefore compelled to say to Abbott that the performances must be postponed. Liston, who had with childish delight hugged himself that his troubles were over, was applied to in the emergency to act one night more. It was a struggle, and he consented: there was 60*l.*; 20*l.* would have been the outside without a star. Poor Liston! of all the childish pouting you ever saw, it flogged all—he could hardly hold up his head or speak till it was over. My second night "Who Wants a Guinea," "Hit or Miss," Race Song, huzza! "Capital go," as Richard Wilson says.

To-day I dine with Lady Morgan. I am very comfortable here. I am happy to tell you that Sir Arthur Clarke (a knight of the *bath*), to whom I applied for rubbers, has been trying a Dutch bath, and I expect with great effect,

on me. At any rate my case will not be neglected by my trip.

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Dublin, Dec. 18th, 1824.

We are at complete peace here in the theatre. The Bludgeon men are quieted, and the Talbot party discomfited and disgraced. The Philipps's have just returned from Belfast: I have not as yet seen them. Mrs. Jarman is delighted with the manner in which you spoke of her daughter.*

I request that you will not think of accomplishing both tasks—pictures and library. It is quite absurd to make a toil of it, and imagine that you are confined to time. I should like the Gallery to be completed, because that will be a fidgety job, and too much for my nerves to endure when at home; but the other need not be hurried, and I am sure, from the way in which you spoke of it, that you dread it. I shall be home by the middle of January; and I am confident you will not have time to do it. Pray give up the notion, and think only of rest and pleasure in my absence.

A dispute arose here, at a fine collection of statues, busts, &c., about the Venus de Medicis. A lady (and of title too) exclaimed, "Well, of all the Vanus's, give me the Belfast Vanus!"†

C. MATHEWS.

* The present Mrs. Ternan.—A. M.

† A popular steam-boat.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Belfast, Dec. 20th, 1824.

Clarke, a good-natured fellow, that I remember with pleasure for his treatment of me at Waterford, came to Dublin, packed up for me, and waited to accompany me here. We posted together, and he had a comfortable roast-beef dinner, with turkey, and mince pies, waiting for me. Mrs. Clarke, a very good-natured person also, has provided me with a very comfortable lodging, and I am quite satisfied with present appearances. This is a sort of Scotch town.

At any rate, thank God! that rascal ——— is checked: he has been taken up for seditious language, and prevented coming to England, as a delegate, to beat up for recruits for another rebellion. I shall be here a fortnight. I cannot object to anything you wish about dear Charles: let him have what you like. Merry Christmas and happy new year to you both! I shall drink his health to-day, as we did the health of you both yesterday.

C. Mathews.

The following will describe another case wherein my husband's hoaxing propensities were brought into action.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Belfast, Dec. 31st, 1824.

Pray do not fail to get a frank for the inclosed to go by Tuesday's post. It is a hoax I am playing off upon Abbott, whom I wish to believe that I am at Kentish Town. A letter thence in my own hand will be sufficient. If a frank is too troublesome, or not come-at-able, pop him into the

post. It will be useless after Tuesday, as I shall be in Dublin on Friday.

Thanks for the dear little Count's letter—it is the best we have ever received. Delicious! I had about three batches of regular laughter out of it last night. The "John Bull," too, on the Liverpool row, quite delicious.

If my love for you can be increased, it is when you ask of me if I think twenty-two guineas (or any other sum) is too much for your comfort and health. Be assured there is no sacrifice I would not make to purchase your real content and comforts at home.

C. MATHEWS.

The letter of the Count is here literally copied.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

MADAME,

I beg of you, madame, will accept my sincere thank for madame's kind and charming letter of the 28th of last mon. which I had the honour to receive. I trust you are and will continue well for the sake of your friends, in the number of whom, I beg I may be allowed permission to rank myself. I hope, madame, that you will take all possible car of your health, and also that Mr. Mathews is well. To him I beg my best compliments. I am very glad to hear of his safe return to home from America, at your enchanting and beautiful cottage, which I shall for ever admire. I think that my dear friend, Mr. Charles Mathews (a few lines for whom I shall add to this letter), has done exceedingly well in travelling to Italy,—a country which he will find very favourable to improvement in that branch of his study. If, however, I may be permitted to

express my sentiments, I am rather hort at the idea that you, madame, are left by them. But thos dismal and gloomy events which often we met with, as frozen mist aspect of a deep winter. But most be trust, that nature of all things, as well knowing nature atracte similar nature meet soon together. Therefore, as sun pip trought the dark cloudy sky, disperse the aspect of the winter melting frosty snow, how joy season when spring shall put forst her blossams, and summer offer ripned grapess in their return tested together. How happy mortals in the cottage to find abounding happiness to their wish, and by their presence, madame, will doubly feel the pleasure of being together, and you be amply repaid for all the uneasiness madame have suffered in their absence, and be restored to that full enjoyment of pleasure and happiness which madame so well deserve. As for my shoes, Dr. Haggitt wishd himselfe to present to the King, and I do not know myselfe what he has done. But when I come to London, as I am anxious to be there, pay my respect to you, madame, than I think we will know what he done.

I remain, madame, with profound respect,

Your most hble. & obed. servt.

JOSEPH BORUWLASKI.

Durham, 19th Feb. 1824.

TO C. J. MATHEWS, ESQ.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I was very much pleased to hear that you had set out with Lord and his amiable lady to visit Italy. You will, I am sure, be highly delighted in your travels through that charming country, with its great variety of beauty scenery and with thos admirable works of the greatest

artists in architacture, sculpture and peintings, for which it is so justly famous. There you will gate the images of many pagan goddesses and females renowned for theire beauty. Io, also called as Isis, the wife of Osiris, worshipped by the Egyptians, and conjectured by Plutarch to be the same with the goddess Minerva, Venus, Diana, the lovely Helen, and many otheres. You will, at the same time, enjoy the peculiar happiness of being in the company of a living beauty, whom you may compare with these, and who will be found to excel them all; for never, in my various wanderings through the world, did I witness charms equal to thos possessed by Lady Blessington.

My dear friend, writte me, and believe your truly most affectionet— JOSEPH BORUWLASKI.

TO —— ESQ.

Ivy Cottage, Kentish Town.

I am delighted to get a letter from an old friend; but it is on condition he does not say, "Pray write by return of post." I have got a blister, the size of a pie-dish, on my hip,—the second within five days. To this lucky circumstance you have to attribute your good fortune in getting so long a letter. Phew! I'm much fatigued. I have really rational hope, after ten years' lameness, of a considerable relief, if not a cure. A surgeon, who has had lots of experience in the collieries, where they tumble down every day, has taken a fancy to cure me, because he has cured similar cases. He is a sort of "no cure no pay man;" but not entirely depending on his own skill. He has called in Brodie, the first *hip* man we have, who pronounced my case curable; and blistering is the first gentle treatment I

have experienced. Here I am floored. I have not room to remark on all your letter; but I will say you are a brute for suspecting me of anything so dirty as the feeling you half attribute to me about the bond business. If I did not think you would pay me, or my son, what I advanced without any bond, I would not have lent it at all. *You* proposed the bond.

How is Nunky? I hope he won't serve you as Buckthorne was served. My wife desires all manner of kind sayings to you and yours.

Ever thine, whilst this machine is to him,

C. MATHEWS.

About this period Mr. Mathews was induced, by the persuasions of some interested persons, to embark large sums in the purchase of shares in two "Companies;" and not only did he eventually lose all the money which he had at various times paid for the shares, but he had to avert actions afterwards brought against him as a share-holder, for sums due to the tradesmen employed by the Companies. I pass over these events as rapidly as possible, as a detail of them would be very uninteresting and tedious to the reader, as well as painful to my own feelings, which suffered intensely at the time.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Newry, Jan. 4th, 1825.

I have to announce again my safe arrival. I finished last night at Belfast, and made by my week 110*l.* This

was in proportion better than Dublin; but this is a distracted country, and theatricals suffer in common with the rest. I need not say that your letter to-day, which welcomed me as I got into the chaise (indeed I waited for it), filled these eyes *with tears* which would have been dry enough at parting with ———. The opinion of the dear Speaker of our blessing and treasure, was as gratifying to me to read as I am sure it was to you to write. God bless him and you, and preserve you both to him who lives but for you, unalterably and affectionately.

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Newry, Jan. 12th, 1825.

How are you all at Highgate, you happy creatures? "How little does the landsman know!" Ah! very fine! Well; the letter opposite must be sealed; and when *shaken*, to be then *taken*—as directed.

C. MATHEWS.

I have *nothing to say* and *no time to say it in*. By the time you receive this I shall have arrived, please God, and have performed in Liverpool. "This country never was and never will be, what it was before the union." (!) "Good! now that I *heard*."

C. MATHEWS.

Here follows a description of Mr. Mathews's hoax upon Mr. Abbott, alluded to in the recent letter.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Dublin, Jan. 8th, 1825.

I arrived here last night safe and sound, and found Abbott in prime order for my hoax. I had little else to amuse myself during the late pouring weather, but imposing on the credulity of a friend. In the first place, I despatched my letter to you, which was supposed to be written at Kentish Town. In it I said I had fled from Belfast with disgust. On my arrival at home I had found a letter containing a challenge, of the grossest description of insult. I could not brook it. I had been accused of sneaking out of Dublin to avoid chastisement, &c.; and I had resolved to return to Ireland for the purpose of meeting my antagonist. I should leave London on Wednesday night, of course be with him to dinner on Friday, begged Elder might be invited, whom I wished for a second, &c. On Tuesday I wrote a letter from Newry, which Mrs. Clarke copied, and sent off to inquire of Mr. Abbott if I had been seen in Dublin; that they had missed me, and could not gain any intelligence of me. It was supposed I was gone to England, &c.

I did not start from Newry until after post-time, arrived from Dublin. He bit. An answer to Mrs. Clarke confirmed my hopes. On arrival in Dublin I found Elder (by appointment) waiting for me at the coach-office. He had written to Abbott to say he should go to Howth to meet me. The coach was late, and they dined without me; but kept a leg of pork smoking. The moment I drove up to the door out rushed Abbott! There was a melancholy silence. Mrs. Abbott quite in a tremor. "I thought I had gone too far." This feeling was strong and genuine. The questions about you and Charles, my passage, the name of the vessel, the number of passengers, &c. were

almost too much; I could hardly stand it. Mrs. Abbott left the room. The tears were in Abbott's eyes. He turned pale. "Now, Mat, relieve my mind; who is the fellow?" &c. You must imagine the rest. I kept him but a short time in suspense, and confessed the whole by producing his own letter to Mrs. Clarke. It made a good laugh all the evening; and he confessed that it was the most complete hoax he had ever known. He never for one moment had a suspicion of an imposition.

I don't think Lamb has been lucky in the Life of Liston; at least, it did not hit me.*

Did you read the article on "M'Adamization," in "John Bull?" To prove an Irishman's appreciation of that sort of *badinage*, I lent it to a passenger in the coach yesterday, who upon returning the paper said, "I perceive M'Adam's plan won't do, by the paper."—"Not do!" said I, with surprise. "Oh! no, the objections were too numerous. Even the editor was made a convert to that opinion," &c. If you remember the article, you will enjoy *this*.

I am delighted at the co-operation of Peake and Reynolds;† but I hope they will work. I think Moncrieff has given quite enough of character and matter to make an entertainment in such hands. I *do* wish Knight to take Kelly's portrait.‡

C. MATHEWS.

* An imaginary and burlesque account of Mr. Liston's birth, parentage, and education, in a magazine, not as felicitously executed as most of that delightful writer's productions. —A. M.

† John Hamilton Reynolds, Esq. author of "The Garden of Florence," &c. a charming writer.—A. M.

‡ The son of "Little Knight," whom I have mentioned in an earlier page, and who painted an admirable portrait of Mr. Michael Kelly, now at the Garrick Club.—A. M.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Liverpool, Jan. 11th, 1825.

Another safe arrival, thank God! after the much-dreaded Liverpool passage. I did not come by Parkgate, indeed. I left Dublin at half past two yesterday, and before six was in bed at the Waterloo, having been only thirteen hours on the passage, most calm and delightful, and not to be expected at this time of the year. The instant I was up I was obliged to go to the theatre; and you may perhaps fancy the sort of day I have spent. Strange dressers, strange musician, strange everything. I have been six hours hard at work, and have only just time to get my dinner and return to my work. I am blessed with my usual strength, and more than usual in my hip, that *was* lame. It will be enough, I trust, to say, that England has cheered me on my arrival from Ireland. All the dress-boxes are taken for to-night and Thursday; and as the town cannot be accommodated in two nights, such is their anxiety to hear my "Trip," they hope I will stay a third. Bravo!

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Liverpool, Jan. 13th, 1825.

"Providence never forsakes the good man's child!" The good people of Liverpool will amply compensate me for all the miseries I have endured. I opened here to 244*l.*! gaining clear more in one night than by my first six nights in Dublin. There has not been such a box-sheet since Miss O'Neill was here as to-night. There is not *one* place to be had, in upper or lower boxes. We have had people enough turned away to fill half another

plan; and therefore, though very troublesome as to moving my scene and baggage, I return here for another night, Monday next. Saturday, I perform at Manchester.* They were joyous at Liverpool beyond all precedent; they roared; and though I had only been four hours in bed, and was four or five hours at hard work with dresses, &c. I never played in better spirits. Lots of Americans, who were as well pleased as the English; and their report is entirely favourable throughout the town. This must put you in spirits, as it has me. It is "a capital go," for had it not been for my failure in Dublin, I should not have visited Liverpool. Indeed I had written to Lewis to say so before I left home.

If the people will but laugh as I did at "Bow Street," that is all I ask. I actually was convulsed, and laughed until I was blinded by tears. It is a little fortune. I hope you and Charles think highly of it. Your phrase of "I think it *good*" is cold; but perhaps you feared to anticipate. It is by far the best song I have ever received in first shape.† The other is admirable as to satire, and will tell, but not so laughable. But what I have *liked* has never failed yet.

My old cruet of Cayenne (Ryley) sticks to me.

Mr. Hannibal Hewlet‡ has been here, and gave an "At Home," and actually applied to Lewis for an engagement. He went to London, as he said, to challenge me, for ridiculing him in a part he never played. I cannot find any body who saw him; but he performed here two or three nights.

* Mr. Mathews considered the Manchester audience one of the most discriminating in England.—A. M.

† This song was from the pen of that humorous writer, Mr. Peake.—A. M.

‡ The black Roscius of a minor theatre in New York.—A. M.

Love me very much, and tell Charles to do the same; and be assured that mine will only terminate with my existence. God bless you!

CHARLES MATHEWS.

The following consequence of his recent hoax reached Mr. Mathews after he had quitted Ireland. The effect of this letter upon the recipient can be imagined.

TO C. MATHEWS, ESQ.

SIR, Theatre Royal, Dublin, 15th Jan. 1825.

Your conduct has been most insincere and ungentlemanly from the time you came to Dublin. But situated as I was, having you as a guest in my house, I trust I was too well acquainted with the behaviour of a gentleman to show those feelings, I should have been perfectly justified in expressing. It is, however, a lesson to me for the future; and I will take care that, in my house at least, the rights of hospitality shall not be again invaded. What you are pleased to term a joke, I choose to look upon as an insult; and the more consideration I give it, the more I am annoyed that I did not notice it as I ought to have done at the time. There is no word in the English language strong enough to express the disgust I feel. *I am always to be found.* Sir, your obedient servant,

WILLIAM ABBOTT.

On the reverse of the leaf upon which the above was written, appeared the following.

P. S. What a lucky dog you are! Only thirteen hours crossing! I need not say how delighted I am that your trip

will turn out profitably. I wish to God that Dublin had contributed more largely; and when I say this, it is with no selfish feeling,* but because your talent and kindness never can be repaid. You are a real good fellow, and everybody knows it. Yours ever,

WM. ABBOTT.

This was "turning the tables" fairly enough; and Mr. Abbott's letter will be another evidence of the happy terms upon which my husband lived with his theatrical brethren; although indulging in every species of familiarity and boyish jest with generous confidence, no offence ever ensued, even from these offsprings of an excitement so essential a part of an actor's life.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Liverpool, Jan. 20th, 1825.

Not so great last night; but the book is capital for to-morrow. This trip will give me nearly 500*l.* in the five nights. Bravo!—the greatest thing I have ever done out of London. I am childishly impatient now to get home, where I hope to find you and dear Charles well. I am in excellent health and spirits, cheered greatly too by my faith in Messrs. Grey and Brodie.†

C. MATHEWS.

* Mr. Abbott was the lessee of the Dublin theatre.—A. M.

† Now Sir Benjamin Brodie.—A. M.

CHAPTER XXI.

Mr. Mathews's new Entertainment, called his "Memorandum Book."— Programme. — Description of the Performance. — Remonstratory Ode from the Elephant at Exeter Change to Mr. Mathews.—Letter from Mr. J. G. Lockhart to Mr. Mathews.—Letters to Mrs. Mathews.—Letter from Mr. Knight to Mr. Mathews. — Letters to Mrs. Mathews: Plymouth Gaieties: Expedition to Loo. — Letter from Mr. Nash to Mr. Mathews. — The Shakspeare Monument. — Delusion of Mr. Nash respecting the age of Mr. Mathews. — Mr. Mathews's power of representing extreme age. — Anecdotes.— Letter from Mr. Theodore Hook to Mr. Mathews: unsuccessful hunt for a Dinner. — Letter to Mrs. Mathews: Mr. Farley and the cat in the boot. — Letter from Mr. Mathews to his Son. — Letter to Mrs. Mathews: a disagreeable journey.—The Mayor of Worcester.—Letters to Mrs. Mathews.

AFTER the *rehearsal dinner* at the cottage, to the select and critical friends who annually favoured my husband with their "most attentive hearing," and made their valuable comments upon his forthcoming Entertainment, he once more opened the English Opera-house with new materials, in the form of—

MR. MATHEWS'S MEMORANDUM-BOOK

Of Peculiarities, Characters, and Manners, collected during his various Trips.

PART I.—Family Fireside.—Thoughts on Trips.—Mrs. Tinsel of —— Parish.—Charitable Neighbour.—John's Wages.—Memorandum-Book Opened.

Song—*Memoranda in Confusion.*

Authors, Actors, Managers, and Critics.—Mr. King of the Crown.—Regal Innkeeper.—King, Lords, and Commons.—Nat Glibb.—Waiter.—Prime Minister.—"Make every Body Comfortable."

Song—*Night Coach.*

Mr. Doublechin.—A Lady of Some Weight.—Mr. Frost.—Improvident Traveller.—Mr. Quiverton.—Everlasting Singer.—Testy.—Jonathan on the Roof.—Travelling Astronomer.—How to prevent Sleep in a Coach.—Mr. Allum, the Writing Chymist, and his Uncle, Mr. Christopher Chyle.—Food and Poison.—Mr. Allbutt.—The Fortunate Youth, and his Friend, a Man of Few Words.—Old Startle.—Calamities of Prosperity.—How to dispose of your Money.

Song—*Bubbles, a Capital Song.*

Speculations.—Shares.—Companies.—Sinking Funds.—Gas.—Mr. Fleece.—Tunnels.—Silver Mines.—Lord Drowsy—Unique Projects.

PART II.—Coffee House.—Allum.—Chyle.—Death in the Pot.—Scientific Starvation.—Adulteration.—Bread, Wine, Coffee—Tea and Milk Analysed.—Mr. Allbutt.

Song—*Sailing Match.*

Preparations for a Boat-full of Pleasure.—Mr Brownrigg and Family.—Mr. Literal.—Ballustrade Pillory.—Politesse of Lord Chesterfield.—Lumbago.—Antelope and Penelope.—Royal Anecdote—Sailing Match Lost.—Music on the Water.—Catastrophe.—Kemble and Bensley.—Hamlet and Ghost.—Red Arsenic—Methusalem—Country Bank Notes.—Solicitors.—"As you were," and "As you are."

Song—*Old and New Times.*

M'Adam.—Coffee-Houses and Club-Houses.—Working Company.—Civility to Animals, &c.—Invitation to Dinner.—Chyle's Haunch.—Deaf Housekeeper.—Trumpet Duet Without Music.—Novel Watchman.—"What's o'clock."

Song—*Public Office in Bow Street.*

Night Charges.—Mr. Chubb and his Wooden Leg—Wizen and O'Halloran. — Miss Fumbustle. — Desperate Assault. — Voiceless Complainant.—Ebenezer Dumps and his Bail.—O'Fagan and his Wife.—Hibernian Dispute.—Native Witnesses.—Illegality of Police Reports.—Mr. Mathews going to Gloucester.—Mr. and Mrs. Chyle.—Allum.—"Finale," by Mr. Mathews, Mrs. Chyle, Mr. Chyle, Mr. Allum, and Mr. Allbutt's Friend.

PART III.—A Monopolylogue, to be called the

Crown In-n Danger.

Nat Glibb, a Waiter . .	Mr. Mathews !
Friaswaffer, a Tender-Hearted German Cook	Mr. Mathews ! !
Molly Gramachree, an Itinerant from the Emerald Isle . .	Mr. Mathews ! ! !
Thady, her Son . . .	Mr. Mathews ! ! ! !
Mr. Christopher Chyle, come out Pleasuring . . .	Mr. Mathews ! ! ! ! !
Mr. Allum, come out Experimentalizing	Mr. Mathews ! ! ! ! ! !
Brother Simple, of the Loyal Laughing Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons	Mr. Mathews ! ! ! ! ! ! !

And, Mr. Mathews on a Provincial Trip.

I insert here the following contemporary criticism on this entertainment.

Mr. Mathews's "Memorandum Book" consists of three parts. After some consideration, and he may well be puzzled how to keep up the shuttlecock,—a difficult

MATHEW-O RAMA for 1825 or

'My Memorandum Book' 'Make every body comfortable' 'that's my way'—

LIBRARY OF THE BOMBAY BRANCH OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

game to change sides and play at alone,—he resolves to trust to the hints and sketches afforded him by his memorandum-book; and with these aids he finishes his annual picture for the exhibition. "Don't talk to me of literary men and books," said a warm old Citizen, "I never wish to see any man of letters at my door except the postman, and I know of but one book in the world that 's worth reading, and that 's my *banker's book!*" The use to which Mr. Mathews has put his memorandum-book will, we apprehend, make him sympathise very much with the taste of the literary old gentleman in question, as he contemplates his increased power of drawing drafts, produced by his skill in making sketches.

The first song, which, with the patter, as it is called, was enough to put him out of breath for the rest of the evening, is entitled "Memoranda in Confusion," and that is nearly the best definition we can give of the plot of the whole piece. Here, in his particularly gay and tangent style, we have everything that moves on the earth or the waters: nothing seems to be untouched; but only touched or tickled, not hurt. — Mr. Accum, with his "Death in the Pot;" into which, however, he himself appears to have no objection to dip his own whiskers—Mrs. Fry, or rather her clumsy imitators, with so much feeling for the abandoned in gaol, that they have none left for their own children abandoned at home—scandal—speculation—and every folly that flies. It would be hard and invidious to particularize; but, amongst the anecdotes, "The Watchman, or What's o'clock?"* is really and truly a rich bit. These, as usual, he embodies, and brings before the spectator in their own proper persons, or

* This is the representation alluded to in Sir Thomas Lawrence's note to Sir George Beaumont.—A. M.

rather *ad vivum* in his own; he possessing the most extraordinary art of being

"All things by turns, and nothing long."

The Songs, which create a diversion in every sense of the *word*, but can scarcely be said to relieve the dialogue, for it wants no relief in the way of merriment, are among the most effective we remember in any of these pieces. The *Sailing Match* is excellent, and the *Public Office, Bow-street*, admirable.

The concluding Part is a sort of "General Election," in which Mr. Mathews is returned by every borough, and represents them all with great fidelity, for they themselves could not exhibit their *corruptions* more forcibly. The scene is an inn, which Mr. Mathews, an excellent customer, fills from the garret to the kitchen. Several new characters are here introduced, amongst which *Friaswaffer*, a tender-hearted German cook; *Molly Grammachree*, an Irish beggar, with *Thady* her son, and *Brother Simple*, a free-mason, are personated by Mr. Mathews with surprising effect and irresistible drollery.

Among other traits, he introduces an elderly gentleman, a *Mr. Methusalem*, who observes that in his *youthful days* a newspaper would serve a family with amusement for a week; but now it took a week to read a newspaper. In those "olden times" we had snow in December, and sunshine in May; while now snow comes in March, and sunshine in September. Such was the entire change in all things, that youth who formerly thought of nothing but love and the wedding-ring, were now attracted only by prize-fighting and the prize-ring. He endeavours to improve on the ingenuity of the projectors of the day, by proposing in "A Trip to the City," "The New London Patent Adonis Hair-Curling Company," to go by steam,

with "*a twenty-barber power;*" — a "New London Metropolitan Self-adjusting Dumb-bell Company;" — a "British Mouse-trap Company," and a "Tunnel Company" to the Antipodes, through which the passengers and parcels are to travel to the other side of the world, through the centre of the earth, in "Patent Suspension-buckets."

There was an imitation of Mr. John Kemble, who was introduced in the performance of "Hamlet," when Bensley, who played the *Ghost*, imagined himself poisoned by a glass of brandy and water which he had drunk. Suett, Fawcett, Dowton, Munden, and others, were very successfully mimicked in the "Novel-reading Watchman." Mr. Mathews having observed a watchman constantly reading in his box, when returning home after the performance, at Drury-lane theatre, some years since, used to pop his head into the watch-box, and squeak, in a cracked and puerile voice, "What 's a clock?" He passed the word to his brother players above enumerated, who carried on the same frolic; and, in their respective tones and manners, he gave the "What's o'clock?" Finally, he, Mr. Mathews, was apprehended by the watchman, whose complaint at Bow-street he gives in a dialect perfectly Hibernian, which terminates unsuccessfully, leaving him to pay five shillings for being "insolent to the gentleman." Among other characters is a pragmatical fop, whose conversation is almost made up of ejaculations of "Indeed!" and "You don't say so!"

The following whimsical evidence of Mr. Mathews's popularity appeared at this time. It is written by John Hamilton Reynolds, Esq., and will be welcome to every reader of this book.

REMONSTRATORY ODE

FROM THE ELEPHANT AT EXETER CHANGE, TO MR. MATHEWS, AT THE ENGLISH OPERA HOUSE.

"See, with what courteous action,
He beckons you to a more removed ground!"
Hamlet.

1.

Oh, Mr. Mathews! Sir!
(If a plain Elephant may speak his mind,
And that I have a mind to speak, I find,
By my inward stir)
I long have thought, and wish'd to say, that we
Mar our well-merited prosperity,
By being such near neighbours:—
My keeper now hath lent me pen and ink,
Shoved in my truss of lunch, and tub of drink,—
And left me to my labours!—
The whole menagerie is in repose:
The Coatamundi 's in his Sunday clothes,
Watching the Lynx's most unnatural doze;
The Panther is asleep,—and the Macaw;
The Lion is engaged on something raw;
The White Bear cools his chin
'Gainst the wet tin;
And the confined old Monkey's in the straw.
All the nine little Lionets are lying
Slumbering in milk, and sighing;
Miss Cross is sipping ox-tail soup
In her front coop.
So here 's the happy mid-day moment,—yes!
I seize it, Mr. Mathews, to address
A word or two
To you;—

On the subject of the ruin which must come—
By both being in the Strand, and both *at home*
On the same nights; two treats
So very near each other,
As, oh, my brother!
To play old Gooseberry with my receipts.

2.

When you begin
Your summer fun, three times a week, at eight,
And carriages roll up, and cits roll in,
I feel a change in Exeter 'Change's change,
And, dash my trunk! I hate
To ring *my* bell when you ring *yours*,—and go
With a diminish'd glory through *my* show!
It is most strange;
But crowds, that meant to see me eat a stack,
And sip a water-butt or so, and crack
A root of mangel-wurzel with my foot;—
Eat little children's fruit;
Pick from the floor small coins—
And then turn slowly round and show my india-rubber loins:
'T is strange!—most strange,—but true,
But these same crowds seek *you!*
Pass *my* abode,—and pay at *your* next door!
It makes me roar
With anguish when I think of this; I go
With sad severity my nightly rounds,
Before one poor front row;
My fatal funny foe!
And when I stoop, as duty bids, I sigh,
And feel, that while poor elephantine I
Pick up a sixpence, you pick up the pounds.

3.

Could you not go?
Could you not take the Coburg or the Surry?
Or Sadler's Wells—(I am not in a hurry;

I never am !) — for the next season — oh !
Woe ! woe ! woe !
To both of us, if we remain; for not
In silence will I bear my altered lot,
To have you merry, sir, at my expense;
No man of any sense,
No true great person, (and we both are great
In our own ways), would tempt another's fate.
I would myself depart
In Mr. Cross's cart,
But, like Othello, "am not easily moved."
There 's a nice house in Tottenham Court, they say,
Fit for a single gentleman's small play;
And more conveniently near your home,
You 'll easily go and come.
Or get a room in the city, in some street,
Coachmakers' Hall, or the Paul's Head,
Cateaton Street;
Any large place, in short, in which to get your bread;
But do not stay and get
Me into the Gazette !

4.

Ah ! the Gazette !
I press my forehead with my trunk, and wet
My tender cheek with elephantine tears,
Shed, of a wallnut size,
From my wise eyes,—
To think of ruin after prosperous years;
What a dread case 'twould be
For me, large me !
To meet at Basinghall Street the first, and seventh,
And the eleventh !
To undergo (D——n !)
My last examination !
To cringe, and to surrender,
Like a criminal offender,
All my effects; my bellpull and my bell,
My bolt, my stock of hay, my new deal cell,

To *post* my ivory, sir!
And have some curious commissioner
Very irreverently search my trunk!
'Sdeath! I should die
With rage to find a tiger in possession
Of my abode; up to his yellow knees
In my old straw; and my profound profession
Entrusted to two beasts of assignees.

5.

The truth is simply this:—if you *will* stay
Under my very nose,
Filling your rows,
Just at my feeding time, to see *your* play,
My mind 's made up,
No more at nine I sup,
Except on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays, Sundays, *
From eight to eleven,
As I hope for heaven.
On Thursdays, and on Saturdays, and Mondays,
I 'll squeak, and roar, and grunt without cessation,
And utterly confound your recitation.
And, mark me! all my friends of the furry snout
Shall join a chorus shout,—
We will be heard—we'll spoil
Your wicked witty ruination toil.
Insolvency must ensue
To you, Sir, You;
Unless you move your opposition shop;
And let me stop.

6.

I have no more to say:—I do not write
In anger, but in sorrow; I must look,
However, to my interests every night,
And they detest your "Memorandum-Book."
If we could join our forces—I should like it;

---

* Mr. Mathews's non-performance nights.

You do the dialogue and I the songs.
A voice to me belongs;
(The editors of the Globe and Traveller ring
With praises of it, when I hourly sing
God save the King.)
If such a bargain could be schemed, I'd strike 't!
I think, too, I could do the Welsh old man
In "the Youthful Days," if dressed upon your plan;
And the attorney in your Paris trip,
I'm large about the hip!
Now think of this!—for we cannot go on
As next door rivals, that my mind declares:
I must be penniless or you begone!
We must live separate or else have shares.
I am a friend or foe,
As you take this:—
Let me your profitable hubbub miss,
Or be it "Mathews, Elephant, and Co.!"

1825. J. H. R.

Amongst the memorable guests at Ivy Cottage, the following short letter will record a name which I am proud to associate with that of my husband; regretting at the same time that I do not possess any more important communication from the same distinguished pen wherewith to grace these pages.

TO C. MATHEWS, ESQ.

Northumberland Street, Edinburgh,

DEAR SIR, March, 1825,

I was asked lately by Mr. Croker to get for him a specimen of the handwriting of Home, author of "Douglas." I applied accordingly to his relations here, and have got

more than I wanted,—that is, two letters, and two scraps of the *original rough draft* of Douglas.

It occurred to me that one letter and one bit of Douglas might be acceptable to you, in case you had not anything of Mr. Home's in your invaluable collection of autographs; so I accordingly enclose them.

May I beg you to present my best respects to Mrs. Mathews; and to assure her that I shall never forget the charming day I spent at the most charming of all cottages. Yours very sincerely,

J. G. LOCKHART.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Brummy, Wednesday.

Though I am upon the wing to get out of this dull town, five miles to my namesake, Mathews, I cannot resist sending you a few lines, to thank you for your delightful communications. I had a letter from dear Charley yesterday, with seven verses of a song for Jonathan, out of which I can pick some very good ones. I wrote to thank him for his pains last night. I ruralized yesterday for a chop dinner; and, as I have nothing of my own to say, I will just give you a specimen of an epitaph that I think good. The mourning husband puts his initials at the bottom of the lines.

" Hannah, wife of George Onions.
She was—
But words are wanting to say what.
Look what a wife should be,
And she was that.
GO."

Affectionately yours,

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Wrexham, March 29th, 1825.

We arrived here last night, safe and sound. Charles and I spent this morning at Lord Grosvenor's, the most magnificent of all show houses. To-morrow we proceed to inspect the mines, of which I am part proprietor; and the architect commences his labours. It is proposed to build one hundred cottages; so he will begin largely. Everything at present looks very *real* indeed.* Our landlord has already reported that Charles is appointed Arch-i-tecter to the iron works. Charles joins in love to mamma.

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Wrexham, March 31st, 1825.

I write to say all is well. Charles is hard at work, and we are dining out every day,—meeting with great hospitalities, "indeed to goodness." What strange animals we are! that mere intonation should affect our nerves, and stir up prejudices and kindly feelings. While the sound of the Cockney instantly irritates me, the dear Welsh sing-song warms my heart, as their cwrw does my stomach.

Charles cannot finish his work under three days more; consequently I must return without him.

C. MATHEWS.

* This remark relates to one of the speculations I have alluded to,—a *mining* concern,—which proved to be, without intending a pun, an undermining one to us eventually.—A. M.

TO C. MATHEWS, ESQ.

My dear Mathews, June 24th, 1825.

I thank you for the expedition you have used. You ask me how I could imagine you in such a character, — I answer, because I know you to be a man of extraordinary genius, and what is it that genius cannot accomplish? Perhaps you say "somewhat too much of this." Therefore I desist.

Your confidence as to every iota of the piece I expect as a man of honor and my friend; in both of which points I truly estimate you.

I am, dear Mathews, very faithfully yours,

E. Knight.*

Theatre Royal, Drury Lane.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Plymouth, July 21st, 1825.

I haven ever endured anything equal to my sufferings of yesterday. I never stirred out for a minute; being in the theatre from eleven in the morning until twelve at night. Thermometer nearly 100; for I am taught to believe it is much warmer here than in London. After two or three wet jackets, I stood my two hours manfully before the kitchen range of twenty-four gas-lights. Phew!—Philadelphia was an ice-house to it, with thermometer 112—the house literally crammed; and this the dear people did after the roasting of Monday night. I am as well as ever I have been, with all this exertion; such is the extra-

* I believe Mr. Mathews finally persuaded Mr. Knight to release from him the character alluded to, and the piece was not produced.—A. M.

ordinary effect of the sea air upon me. The nights have been the great punishment. Last night I lay down in my dressing-gown and trowsers, without any bed-covering; but there are flies peculiar to this place, that I will back against a million of musquitoes, that defy sleep early in the morning.

I have sent you a newspaper, to inform you of the gaieties here. I witnessed the whole of the regatta on Tuesday, being my leisure day, in a most delightful manner. The Yacht Club were nearly all here; and on Monday night, after the performance, when I despaired of getting a view of the regatta by water (and the land sight I knew to be something like roasting alive), Sir Godfrey Webster and Col. Grant called on me, to offer me a berth on board the yacht of Mr. Owen Williams. On Tuesday, at ten o'clock, I got on board and cruised until night, seeing the whole of the boat race, and most magnificent bay — a most enchanting scene.

We had 127*l.* last night; being seven more than the greatest receipt before. I rejoice that my energies are still so powerful; for few, I believe, could encounter what I have done here. Let me hear when any improvement takes place in poor dear Louisa's health. I feel most sincerely for her mother. God bless you, and believe me, in *any* weather, *warmly* and affectionately yours,

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Plymouth, July 24th, 1825.

I have been junketing, and did not return until seven last night; when I found your welcome letter, announcing your and Charles's health. This morning I have received

another letter from you, which has grieved me most sincerely. Your words are precisely what I should have written to another upon the melancholy subject of poor Louisa. Believe me, I am as much affected as you are. If she is allowed to move from London, I hope you will persuade her mother to let her come into Devonshire. The air I understand is marvellous for consumptive people.*

I dine to-day with Lord Grey, who has come here for the health of his children. "Oh, the mayor of Loo." Liston's mayor is gone; but I saw one. Captain Cox, whom I met at Stephenson's, made me promise to visit him at Loo. Such an expedition! I shall never forget it; but must reserve the description until I see you. The commencement of the expedition will give you some little idea of it, and that you shall have. I received a note saying that if I would embark on board the Falmouth steam-boat, Captain Cox would come off in a boat from Loo, where the steam-boat will not land passengers. Well, he came not! Boat-signal hoisted — gun fired — all to no purpose — no boat. What is to be done? Where can I land? *Must* I go to Falmouth, forty-five miles—and no getting back in time to act to-morrow? "No: land you at Towey — nine miles further, and twelve from Loo." Anything! Put me on shore. Not one gig or carriage of any description to be had, only saddle-horses. G— and I mounted, with a guide on foot, carrying our bags. Precipices to ride over—the *guide* had never been the road! and such a road I never saw in the wildest part of America! Frequently we encountered four roads, and sometimes six; a stone for a direction-post occasionally occurred, on one side of which

* This deep concern related to the present Mrs. Fairlie.—A. M.

appeared "Loo," and on the other "*Lost*," being an abbreviation of Lostwithiel. We were four hours and a half in a broiling sun, which peeled the skin quite off my nose.—Epitaph at Loo:

"Here lies
The blighted hopes of a Mother,
And the blasted expectations of a Father."

I have received nearly 200*l.* by my week. Very great indeed. I shall do as well at Exeter. No start can do better than the year 1825!

Not a bit of my head complaint from the time I sniffed the sea-air. I have been three hours in the bay to-day. Pray convey love to Louisa, and my most affectionate condolence to her mother.

Ever affectionately, yours,

C. MATHEWS.

P. S. A very pleasant day indeed at Lord Grey's.

TO C. MATHEWS, ESQ.

MY DEAR MATHEWS, 26th July.

I shall certainly vote for your friend, and hope he will apprise me of the day, and that I shall be in town.

There are many competitors in the field, and I am pressed by men of weight; but none of so much weight, with me, as obliging my old friend of the buskin.

Most sincerely, yours,

JOHN NASH.*

Where is Shakspeare?

* The eminent architect.

Mr. Nash's question may possibly induce the reader to inquire why no more has been said about the *monument* to which Mr. Nash refers. Alas! my husband's labour to accomplish this wish of his heart proved something like that of Sisyphus: for it may be said, that as soon as he had rolled up one stone towards the building, it was rolled down again by some repelling force. Thus he went on, struggling against opposition, until the main feature of the undertaking was completely effaced, — his great desire being to erect this monument in the town of Stratford, where the poet was born and buried. His object did not meet with the general concurrence of the Londoners, who were jealous of such preference, and would only cooperate on the condition that the metropolis was to have the honour of such an ornament. Day by day the plan met with stronger opposition; and thus opposed in his original aim, and wearied with the ineffectual struggle to accomplish it, Mr. Mathews at length relinquished the idea altogether. But it will appear from the following letter, evidently written in reply to some allusion to the monument, that Mr. Mathews's hopes were not finally dissipated before the year 1827.

SIR, Whitehall Gardens, April 9th, 1827.

I shall be at Bromley Hill during our Easter recess; and, unless you could call there in your way from Brighton

on the 16th, I fear there would be no chance of our meeting till next month. If you can call there, I would at least show you a pretty spot of ground, and you would find luncheon at two o'clock, and dinner at seven. Now one word as to the Shakspeare monument: I really thought it had fallen to the ground; and, having seen Mr. Nash, I fear we shall not be able to set it up again. As to myself, I would be, most willingly, a subscriber to a monument in London; but my other avocations will not permit me to take any active part in it, as I explained before to Mr. Watson, when he spoke to me on the subject.

Yours, very faithfully,

FARNBOROUGH.

C. Mathews, Esq., Ivy Cottage,
Kentish Town.

I am reminded by the foregoing note from Mr. Nash of a fanciful impression under which that gentleman laboured to the close of his existence, in respect to his own and my husband's relative ages. Upon what Mr. Nash founded his error it is impossible to divine, for *that* he never explained; but he certainly harboured a conviction throughout the greater part of his life, that his age and that of Mr. Mathews agreed within a year! It was his custom, when speaking of my husband to their mutual friends, to observe that "Mathews was indeed a *surprising* man in more ways than one," adding "how young he looks! He and I," he continued, "are of the same age — that is, with the difference of a few months. He was born one year before or one

year after myself, I forget which; — a most wonderful man indeed!" My husband had been told of this, and for some time believed it to be a joke of the relator. One day, however, when we were at his house in Regent-street, Mr. Nash, noticing Mr. Mathews's lameness, and forgetting the accident which caused it, after saying something of their early associations, and repeating several times "*How well you look!*" observed, with something of a self-consoling air, "Ah! my dear old friend! I think I see you begin to be a *little shaken* on *one side!*" At another time, my husband, while staying at the back of the Isle of Wight, took Mr. Liston over one morning to Cowes Castle to make a call upon Mr. Nash, telling Mr. Liston, by the way, of the whimsical delusion under which that gentleman laboured. After the visiters had been welcomed by the master of the mansion, some observation from Mrs. Nash caused her husband to say, "My dear, Mr. Mathews and I were acquainted long before you were born." At which Mr. Liston had some difficulty in abstaining from a burst of laughter at this confirmation of what he had been told. Shortly afterwards, when Mr. Mathews was out of hearing, Mr. Nash observed to Mr. Liston, that their friend was a *wonderful man for his age*, which agreed with his (Mr. Nash's) as nearly as possible! The truth is, that when Mr. Nash acted in Wales in 1796, he was yet a young

man; but he forgot that Mr. Mathews was many years younger: and the circumstance of their meeting upon an equality, — at least, of taste and pursuit, had in the lapse of time since their first warm intimacy given colour to the belief that they were *therefore* on a parity as to years.*

Another reason why such an idea possessed Mr. Nash was probably the extraordinary power Mr. Mathews possessed from his youth of "making up" for, and representing extreme age. This early excellence often gave rise to disputes relative to his own age. I remember his telling me that one night soon after he went to York, he was appealed to by a party of gentlemen who had met at a tavern to settle a wager about his age. They had severally and together seen him perform a variety of characters; and the different impressions of each were written on a slip of paper and deposited under a candlestick until duly answered, when the writer nearest to the truth was to be proclaimed the winner of the stakes. It was then discovered that one person had written him down nineteen, and another eighty. This was a great compliment to the actor, but little to be wondered at from persons probably not used to dramatic illusion, and ignorant of the skill which produces it.

On another occasion, he had been performing

* Mr. Nash, I believe, had turned eighty when he died, consequently was at least twenty years the senior of his *play-mate.*

Item, a very aged character, in the "Deserted Daughter." After the audience left the theatre, Mr. Mathews turned with the crowd, as Lovelace did with a church congregation (in order to appear *one of them*), and listened to the various remarks upon the night's entertainment. After a party had discussed the whole evening's performance, and commented upon the actors, one man observed in continuation, — "But, as for *Mathus, it's time that aud* (old) *chap lapped up* (retired). *It's a shame to let him work so hard at his time o' life.*"

In London he was seldom allowed opportunity to exhibit his skill in this sort of part, which originally he preferred acting. I remember at York his *Crazy* in "Peeping Tom" as the most extraordinary picture of decrepit, imbecile old age that could be conceived. It was almost affecting: he reminded me of the man mentioned by Madame de Staël, whom it might have been supposed *Death had forgotten to strike*, concluding him long since taken.

TO MR. MATHEWS.

Prince of Wales's Coffee House, 8 o'clock,
DEAR MAT. September 21st, 1825.

I never went sporting for a dinner that I bagged my bird in my life. Broderip asked me to dine with him to-day, and went out and forgot it; so, I said to myself, says I, I want to ask Mat. or Mrs. Mat. two questions about

Charles's "Trip to Rome." So on, says I, I'll go to Millfield Lane. I did. On my way I forgot why Broderip forgot *his* engagement;—natural enough—modern Aristophanes—beautiful view—charming grounds—pleasant company,—poor me, of course, rejected. Well, up I *goes*. Man with powder and an apron opens gate—expecting company—doesn't know whether Mr. Mathews is at home or no—goes to see—good butler, but cannot lie steadily;—so out comes a woman. Satire on the sex to think they have more composure than man in a quandary.—Master not at home.—Novelty, says I, Mathews *at Home* anybody can see: but, to see Mat. not at home, is not to be bought.—Thank you, ma'am, says I; and down hill I tumbled. At its foot, *ex-pede*, I discovered (not *Herculem*) but the reason why you chose to deny yourself. Why didn't you come out and speak? I most ardently eschew your mutton, beef, veal, and ham. I only wanted three words of you.—That's your affair. Now, thinks I, Broderip has cut me, and Mathews has denied himself, I'll go and dine with Nash. Nash dined *out*, waiting for the great gentleman from *Berkshire*. I called upon Lyon (*James*), but, like his namesake, he had *abdicated*. Met Sir Hudson Lowe—did not ask me;—called at Elliott's—*they* dined *out;* so I damned my fate, and ordered dinner at seven here, and here I am; and so I will punish your long legs with a threepenny. Write to me, or ask Mrs. Mat. to write, and tell me of the name of the *tune* of "The Trip to Rome," which it is essential to know; and, if she can furnish me with the *second* verse *complete*, I should be obliged, for Charles has sent only half the stanza.*

* The "Trip to Rome" was printed in the European Magazine.—A. M.

Despatch in all this is important: it is a very, *very* clever production, and Charles *shall* be, what I am sure he *will*, an honour, and a blessing to you both; and so I, in the dumps as I am, pray he may. With best love to Mrs. Mathews, believe me Yours truly,

T. E. Hook.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Cheltenham, Oct. 14th, 1825.

"How sweet is our rest on Sunday!" I have got through a week of unparalleled fatigue; having played three nights running,—one at Gloucester, and last night here. I am, however, well, notwithstanding the worry I have suffered in rehearsing.

I am delighted at the cheerful tone of your letter, which is the first really merry letter I have received from you since I left home. I never will believe you are well when I cannot make out your writing. Not one word have I *squeezed* out of you in reply to any of mine. Look over my last, if you have kept it.

Farley and I are left to breakfast alone. We had, or rather I had, such a joke against him! I have picked up a curious imitation, and with it a story of Sir I—c C—n, — a most absurd, insane, eccentric, propensity of the admiral; the hero of which is a cat put in a boot. I had convulsed Farley with laughter at this story; he roared whenever I reminded him of it, even by one word. I went over to Glo'ster with Charles Young, to see the play and return with him in his phaeton. Farley was acting in the after-piece of the "Broken Sword," and in perfect earnest pouring out his melo-dramatic sentiment, when suddenly a tall figure in a red cloak, with his back to the audience, tall hat, very high feathers, stalked across the

stage, with a boot in his hand, from the top of which peeped out the head of a kitten, which was evidently struggling for escape. I was on and off like lightning. He was so completely overcome that he screeched with laughter, and ran off. Imagine the rest.

There is not a word about poor Louisa—not a word about the new Entertainment—whether Charles has heard of the plan, &c.

Ever affectionately yours,

C. MATHEWS.

TO C. J. MATHEWS, ESQ.

Mold, N. W.

DEAR CHARLEY, Worcester, Nov. 4th.

I received your letter, and will attend to your wish. Lord Deerhurst, who franked this letter, laughed at the idea of your being condemned to be at Mold, and told me an impromptu of Sheridan's, upon being compelled to spend a day or two there.

"Were I to curse the man I hate
From youth till I grow old,
Oh might he be condemned by fate
To waste his days in *Mold!*"

Pray write as often as possible to your mother in my absence. She is very low just now about her mother, who is, I fear, past recovery. Cheer her as much as you can by writing. Remember me to Gray. How will this depreciation in iron affect us? I am told we look very blue upon 'Change. Not a word have I been able to squeeze from you or him about the distillery business. Does he retain his shares? Affectionately yours,

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Bath, Nov. 6th, 1825.

After one of the most tempestuous nights to which I ever was exposed, I arrived at seven this morning at Bristol, and found very comfortable lodgings, all in apple-pie order. I love to be expected, you know. I am in high health, and find I can bear to lose a night's rest as well as ever. For a wonder, I did not sleep at all. The gale was so great that it blew out our lamps; and I really was ridiculous enough to think the coach would be blown over. From odd nervous apprehensions, I could not try to sleep; but I had three sleeping partners, not of the sweetest, who could not bear air. Indeed, it was pouring with rain the greater part of the night; so I was obliged to watch them, and steal a breeze now and then, to prevent the suffocation they seemed to court. I think I have absolved myself of all sins for the last week, by the punishment of this one night.

I have left a bed of thorns for Mr. B——, the manager, to repose on during his season. Great rage universally excited at his having refused the theatre. He has published an address in the Worcester paper, hoping I would reply; but no: it is good to show these managers I can do without them.

I dare say R—— and H—— think there is no harm in dragging the name of the Mayor of Worcester before the public, so as to make him appear ridiculous. You will understand how I felt when I read the enclosed in a county newspaper, copied from a London journal. Every one but the Herald had something on the subject. The article is headed—

"SEDUCTION BY THE MAYOR OF WORCESTER!

"To record the vices and indiscretions of our fellow-creatures is ever an ungrateful task; but the duty becomes monstrously irksome, when in its fulfilment we are compelled to register names which have been heretofore deemed respectable. We are deeply afflicted for the Mayor of Worcester. We have ever believed him to be a gentleman possessing the most benevolent disposition. It was then with no common feeling that we read an account in the Morning Chronicle, which charged him with the seduction of a great public character. We are also concerned for Charles Mathews, who, it seems, has fallen a victim to the seductive arts of the Mayor, who is his particular friend, and has '*seduced him to play six nights!*' Can words express the enormity of a mayor seducing his friend, exposing him to the likelihood of receiving four or five hundred pounds? For ourselves, when we see such treachery in men of eminence, we almost begin to fear the total annihilation of friendship in this world. Attached as we are to Mathews, there is one circumstance which greatly consoles us, and which will, no doubt, soothe Charles under his affliction; for he must be aware, if we may judge from previous instances, that if any thing could add to his professional fame and profit, it must be his *seduction*."

This is all very good-humoured to me; but it must be very annoying to the mayor to have his name made use of in every newspaper. C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Bath, Nov. 14th, 1825.

A thousand thanks for your kind and prompt attention to my request. I received the parcel; and you know the pleasure of such an arrival at breakfast.

To-day I dine with the Windsers. They are universally praised and respected. That *villain* Young was with them

when he promised to go with me to Newmarket. I have completed my old right reading, having *cleared* 200*l.* by my two weeks. I shall be at home, therefore, about Friday the 2nd of December, but only for three or four days. So far as I am concerned, therefore, I don't care a *straw* about the room. If they are disposed to be dilatory, don't let impatience on my account mar your comfort.

I hope Charley will keep his word, and go with me to Edinburgh: and if his mother has not love enough for the father, I hope her undoubted affection for her son may induce her for once to forego her home comforts, and accompany them. Can it be? It is a long way, I know, and I sincerely say *do as you like;* but if we were all together at Christmas, it would be very pleasant. Indeed, indeed, I am a very sad being without you.

What a horror they have made of poor Mic. Kelly! How could any body stand by and see him so abused. Could not they have reduced the large portrait lately published?*

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Bath, Nov. 16th, 1825.

You have really made me very unhappy. If I could have anticipated that such a hint as mine could have occasioned you even the trouble of writing so long a letter, without so cruelly exciting your feelings, I am sure I would not have made the request, and much I repent that I did. You surely have sufficient liberty to say "No; I cannot think of accompanying you so far at this time of the year,"

* This question related to an engraving of Mr. Kelly, affixed to his "Reminiscences," edited by Mr. Theodore Hook.—A. M.

without entering into so long a defence. I am quite convinced of the Quixotism of the scheme now; but one line would have silenced me. If you had said, "Remember my mother," every other word might have been spared. I am sure I would not stand in the way of your affection to her for the world; so do not think any more of my request. I did not mean to be "ungracious," believe me; I could not be quite serious, and so express myself. It is only a little jealous feeling which I have of everybody who shares your smiles and good opinion. I am never *angry*. I am sure you are the best friend I have ever known; but it is jealousy of the enthusiasm I have seen dear Charles elicit, and yet loving him as much as a father can love, that drew forth that remark. I meant no reproach, be assured; but no more of this.

I hope your poor mother will get better, and that your worst fears will not be realized. You must not allow such gloomy feelings to steal across your mind. You speak as if you were conscious of neglect. You have the consolation of knowing that you have always fulfilled your duty to her in the most affectionate manner. You cannot ever reproach yourself; then surely, as it is an event for which we must all be prepared, you ought not to indulge in the grief you so keenly express in your letter, and which I feel I have drawn from you. Would it be more gratifying to you to have your mother with you for a time, as a change of air, and of comforts, perhaps? What think you? I suppose she would not consent. I can only say, do every thing you can to contribute to her comfort, without consulting me. Rely on the inviolable affection of

C. MATHEWS.

Mr. Mathews's next letter to me is written in continuation of his regret at having, as he feared,

given me pain by his remarks, in a recent communication; and although of no general interest for the most part, I feel that a short extract will be well placed here, as developing his habits and character. I give it, therefore, at the risk of being accused of personal vanity in revealing the compliment implied to myself, which must remain, in order to complete the passage alluded to. The words are remarkable, standing as a rare instance of self-commendation in the writer, and a register in his own hand, though by negatives, of some of his most estimable qualities. In conclusion to an apology for his generally quick and inconsiderate method of speaking or writing to those he loved best, in matters of interest to him, with a view to reconcile me to any rashness of the kind, he urges, amongst other reconciling points, the devotion of his heart and mind to his family on all *important* considerations; and pleads for indulgence for mere faults of temper, adding the following remarks.

One thing I would recommend,—to compare your state with that of women who have drunkards, gamblers, and libertines, for their husbands. This I preach because I practice. When away from you, every woman I see, attractive or otherwise, induces a comparison, and always in your favour.

Many of my readers may be disposed to exclaim, perhaps with something of scepticism at

the latter portion of this paragraph, *this is indeed very uncommon!* To these I can only answer, that the writer was not a *common character*. To his superior worth, (and not that of the object of such attachment,) be all the praise.

CHAPTER XXII.

Mr. Mathews's Visit to Scotland. — Letter to Mrs. Mathews: Introduction of Mr. C. J. Mathews to Sir Walter Scott: Invitation to Abbotsford: Sir Walter and the Novels.—Anecdote of an old Laird. — A Scotch Hackney-coachman. — "Jonathan in England."— Effect of that Farce on the American Public. — Attack on Mr. Mathews by an American Writer. — Mr. Mathews's Reply. — Letter from the Rev. Charles Burney to Mr. Mathews.—Letters to Mrs. Mathews: Visit to Abbotsford: Mr. Scrope: Journey to Newcastle.

SHORTLY after the above correspondence, my husband and son returned home, and at the appointed time proceeded without me to Scotland.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Edinburgh, 23d Dec. 1825.

In addition to my own success here, which is keeping up to the mark, and will in all probability give me 500*l.* quite clear, I have to announce the success of our all in all, dear Charles. He first made a strong impression on Jeffery at Eckersall's (George) — no small boast. On Tuesday we met the man of men — the great *Well-Known* — at James Ballantyne's. Charles was all hopes, all fears. Ballantyne, with great kindness, placed him next Sir Walter at dinner. He soon cheered him with his affability; and his good humour brought out our son. He

was very successful. Sir Walter was very much struck with the "Roman sermon," lauded it highly, and Charles's song was repeatedly cheered by him with "vary clever—oh, exceedingly good—excellent, indeed!" When I went into the drawing-room, Ballantyne took me with great mystery into his library, and said, "Your son has made a great impression on Sir Walter, and I think you ought to know it, and treasure it up. He said he was a very clever and a very modest young man; and added, that he was exceedingly struck with him."

This ended in an INVITATION to ABBOTSFORD, and a request that I would bring Charles with me; and in his brief way said, "He's a very nice lad that, and exceedingly clever." Cadell met me next day, and said what a valuable thing it was to Charles to have hit the bard so powerfully; "for you may depend upon this," said he, "Scott never flatters. His praise is indeed worth having." You may suppose how gratified papa was. Charles had the advantage, too, of meeting Mr. Playfair, the architect, who invited him next day, showed him his drawings, &c. In short, I look upon this trip as one of the most fortunate and important events in his life; and I have resolved, in spite of all pursuits in Wales, to keep him here to go to Abbotsford. We shall go after I have finished at Glasgow, about the 8th of January.

Luckily it has reconciled me to a disappointment which alone could have afforded me the opportunity of going myself: this gives me some spare days, which I am sure you will rejoice can be turned to such account for our good fellow. I hope you will feel as warmly as I do about this, and encourage me in encouraging him to neglect his business for such an event.* Next to an invitation to

* Charles was building in Wales.—A. M.

Carlton House, I value this. He is the king of Scottish society; and none but persons of rank and talent can get invitations to Abbotsford. I am proud and happy!* Charles is already convinced of the value of the Scottish character. Not one instance of neglect, or falling off. Too many invitations. On Christmas day we dine with Constable, near Roslyn Castle, and sleep there. For the first time in all our long acquaintance he has thrown off the veil of mystery respecting Scott and the novels. He told me that he is preparing for the press a novel called "Woodstock," and the Life of Bonaparte. He called the other day, and found Scott with both manuscripts on the

* "Mathews used often to refer with great delight," says Mr. Patmore, "and even with a tinge of personal pride (for it would be unjust to call it vanity), to his intimacy with Walter Scott, whom he visited several times at Abbotsford, when the poet was at the height of his fame and popularity as 'The Great Unknown.' Indeed I do not call to mind a single instance, except that of Scott, in which his references to his intimacy with the great and distinguished of the world were blended with any appearance of exultation or self-satisfaction. But in the case of Scott, he evidently piqued himself upon the intercourse, as if he felt it to be an honour and a favour. He (Mathews) used to imitate the poet's tone, manner, and mode of speech, in a way that was quite delightful to those who, like myself, had never seen that illustrious man. This was the more striking from a remarkable resemblance which the eyes and brow of Mathews bore to the portraits, at least, of Scott. I believe I was the first to remark this resemblance; and Mathews was evidently not a little pleased with the observation. It was particularly conspicuous in a bust of Mathews by Behnes, I think," [the bust alluded to was Joseph's; and the resemblance spoken of has often been noticed, —A. M.] "which used to form a part of his theatrical gallery at Kentish Town."

table, writing alternately a fragment of each. He said that his mind was relieved by leaving a dry matter of history to indulge in the imaginative, and equally so after indulging in the regions of fancy by returning to the contemplation of biographical facts. This will be a pretty bit for Mrs. Wilson and the disbelievers.*

C. MATHEWS.

The circumstance of Mr. Mathews's dwelling in this letter so emphatically upon the superiority of the Scottish character, reminds me of several anecdotes related by him in reference to the lower orders of that country, who partook of the respect which the higher ranks excited in him at all times.

I remember his telling me a story of his having dined a short distance from Edinburgh, accompanied by an old laird, much in the habit of exceeding discreet limits, when he found himself induced by good wine and good company to take more of the former than he was justified in doing. On the occasion in question, he had taken Mr. Mathews in his carriage to the house where they dined on a Saturday evening. On their return to Edinburgh after midnight, when they reached the toll-bar through which they had passed on the

* In Mr. Patmore's "Recollections," that gentleman has attributed this account to Mr. Mathews's personal experience, while on a visit to Sir Walter. The mistake was natural, after so long a lapse of time. The fact has only changed its authority.—A. M.

evening of the day before, the usual demand was made by the pretty daughter of the toll-keeper, which the laird resisted on the plea that he had paid *on first passing* through, and should not pay again. The young girl reminded the laird that it was now *another day;* that the Sabbath morn had broken upon his return; and, *therefore* she expected a fresh payment. But the impracticable laird persisted in his wrong-headed determination not to pay a *second toll on one day.* It was in vain his friends expostulated and endeavoured to discharge the claim, in order to get home. The unreasonable laird would not permit his friends or his servants to satisfy the demand, and he applied the most violent and unbecoming language and epithets to the girl; all which she received with great meekness, nevertheless with unflinching determination not to unlock the gate without the toll being first paid. The fury of the laird, and the continuation of the noise, at length induced an old woman in her night-dress to peer out of an upper window, with the question of, "Eh! Maggy, what's the gentleman saying?" when the girl wittily replied, "Ah, mither! it's no the *gentleman;* it's the *wine* that speaks!" Strange to say, this observation sobered the laird, who demurely ordered his servant to "gi'e the lassie her will for *once,* though 'twas *hard to pay twice in one day.*"

As a *pendant* to the preceding picture of native

good sense and moderation, I add the following anecdote:—

During some severe weather, Mr. Mathews had hired a hackney coach to take him to the theatre where he had to act. Something had happened several times to derange the harness, and the driver, a steady old Scotchman, had been obliged to descend from his box to put it in order; but a third occasion put an end to my husband's patience, besides giving him some alarm lest he should not arrive in time to dress. He looked out of the coach-window, and perceiving the man very deliberately tying some rope together, to effect the necessary repair, somewhat angrily called out that such delays were very provoking; and being unable to induce the man to hasten his operations, he exclaimed in a sharp tone, "Be pleased to remember how much time I am losing." —"Vary weel, sir," answered the man, quietly and slowly, "and you will be pleased to remember that I 'm losing just *as* much time as yoursel'."

By way of introduction to some matter I am about to insert, by Mr. Mathews, I am led to observe, that the piece called "Jonathan in England," founded upon the character of *Jonathan W. Doubikins*, in Mr. Mathews's "Trip to America," and admirably worked into a dramatic form by Mr. Peake's witty and humorous pen, had been eminently successful: indeed it was a most excellent farce. Strange to say, however, it proved

the cause of partial offence to the Americans. Why this should have been, it is scarcely possible to explain; since the character which induced a continuation of it gave no offence in the Entertainment. But so it was; and without considering that this piece was not more Mr. Mathews's than any other in which he had a character assigned, he was made wholly responsible for its production, and for the *first* time he was cavilled at as a traducer of the American character, or at least the *ridiculer* of it. He was, in fact, only representing what *in* America is considered a fair subject of laughter and ridicule, like the *gascon* of France, and the cockney of England, which are quoted by the natives themselves as a fair specimen of ignorance, conceit and boasting.

However, those who enjoyed and laughed at *Jonathan W. Doubikins,* as far as "that 'ere trifle went," in "The Trip," gravely and severely objected to him on an extended scale, not with any outward manifestation of anger during the performance, (for there the quality of the piece, and the acting in it throughout, was such as to defy all disapproval,) but one or two persons *put down* their opinions, who found it would be useless to attempt putting down the farce. This partial discontent, I believe, alone caused the misunderstanding which existed among a few misled persons in America, respecting the tendency of Mr. Mathews's *Entertainment* on the subject of their

country. The most direct and noticeable attack, however, came from too clever and liberal a pen to be treated with silence. It was addressed by *an American* to the editor of the European Magazine.

The journals, like the Edinburgh, Quarterly, and Westminster Reviews, are in the habit of speculating constantly on all that occurs in America, as if the affairs of America were as familiar to them as their alphabet, most of them urging, whatever they urge at all, with an air of authority; and yet all but one or two are quite sure to fall into some atrocious blunder whenever they treat of the people, the government, or the resources of America; and a large part, whenever they speak of anything that relates to America. One day we are told about the *island* of Virginia by a British senator, who is neither laughed at nor contradicted; another day we are told by the Quarterly Review that Mexico is in *South* America; and a little time after, by a literary man of great power, that each of the *thirteen* States of North America will do so and so, if this or that should occur; while another gifted writer talks of New England as if it were a single *State*. Such things are disgraceful to the age, and very disgraceful to this country. It is high time for those who perceive the truth to interfere; somebody should undertake to correct the evil in a serious way; and, if others will not, I must.

I shall confine myself now to Mr. Mathews. Before I speak of him, however, it may be well enough to say a few words about some of the peculiarities whereby the people of the Eastern States, or New Englanders, who are the true "*brother Jonathans*," or *genuine Yankees* of the Western World, are set apart as a "peculiar people," somewhat

over-zealous of good works, and altogether distinguished from the people of the Southern, Western, and Middle States of the Confederacy. New England, at the time of the revolution there, was composed of only four States, namely, Massachusetts (the parent of all), Rhode Island, Connecticut, and New Hampshire. These were altogether settled by the English. After a while, Vermont was admitted into the General Confederacy; and having derived her population exclusively from the original stock of English, became of course a part of the New England circle. Within a few years, Maine, which has always been a district of Massachusetts Proper, has become a State by herself. So that New England is now made up of *six* confederate republics, namely, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New Hampshire, Vermont, and Maine.

The people of this part of the United States of North America are the "genuine Yankees," or the real "brother Jonathans" of that large country, and are very unlike their brethren of the South. All their habits are English; and yet, were I called upon to characterise them in a few words, without qualification, I would say, that they are the Scotch of America. They have all the Scotch probity and the Scotch hardihood; like the Scotch, they are spoken of as *the* moral and religious people of a great empire. There is no chivalry among them, and little or no romance; but they abound in vigorous peculiarity; they deal in broad, sensible distinctions, matter of fact, and stubborn truth. For those who love nature, whatever it may be, and wherever it may be, a world of serious enjoyment would be found in a study of the New England character. It affords a variety of combinations, such as I never met with anywhere else. Permit me to give an example or two. One day you will encounter a personage

half hypocrite, half puritan, praying and cheating in the same breath, puffing his wares, and praising his Maker to the very same tune, doing whatever he does with a devout serious look, and both eyes turned up, so that half the time you would see nothing but the whites; wearing a broad-brimmed Quaker hat over a youthful visage, red cheeks, and plenty of hair; two or three watches for ever in sight, and a flashy waistcoat, "for sale," over a coarse "every-day one;" always ready to preach, or pray, or sell, or "swap," or "truck," or "trade" with anybody, for anything; to pitch a hymn in the street, or pitch a copper in church; one "saddlebag," if he have no dearborn,* crowded with hymn-books and religious tracts, which he has undertaken to "give away gratis" for the Bible Society, in his progress through the western territories, but which he is careful to "give away gratis" only to such as are able to take of himself and horse, or himself, horse and cart, so long as he may think proper to tarry, without money and without price; the other crammed, of course, with wooden nutmegs, horn gunflints (both made on the road), blue clay indigo (from the best manufactory), and a sort of patent medicine, which he sells one day for the hair, and another for the itch; to this man for his razor-strop, and to that for his corns; to this girl for perfume, and to that for a bug-destroyer; undertaking to "*suit* his customers" in every case; and if the wares that he puffs off be not good, to make them "good for nothing" on his "return." But such people never return if they can help it; and if they should, where is the difficulty of making whatever they please good *for nothing?* Another day you would fall in with, or perhaps fall out with, a huge, brawny, white-headed fellow, who, under a simple speech,

* A small cart, or light waggon.

and a look of stupid, foolish, good-natured curiosity, would conceal a temper so cool and sharp, so inquisitive, watchful, and sagacious, that before you well knew what he was about you would find that he had overreached you, while you were most upon your guard, or, as they have it in their country, when they have outwitted a very cautious traveller, that he had "guessed you up a tree." While another day, perhaps, you would come athwart a steady, short, plain-looking, broad-shouldered man, with heavy eyebrows, and a small, positive mouth, a person you would swear of great good sense, few words, and a very business-like way of doing matters, whatever they might be, whether momentous or trivial, serious, or profane. In reality, however, you would soon discover him to be, to your cost, if you spoke of the revolutionary war in America, of the sights that were seen, or the sounds that were heard before it broke out, a man full of dark enthusiasm, — of settled, stern, savage enthusiasm, — of deadly prejudice, though quiet as the grave, and of a more inbred, undoubting, religious belief, than you had ever supposed it possible for a human creature to have, in the legendary lore of New England,—witches, and witchcraft, together with a store of miracles, wrought for the pilgrims, by the God of Jacob and Joshua, up to the breaking out of the mighty rebellion, whereby the decided manifestation of his hot and sore displeasure toward the mother country was made, before all the nations of our earth, as they believe in the United States of North America.

And so too, if you choose to turn aside from the eastern, or New England people, and journey toward the south, you would encounter in the first place, on the main road, after leaving Connecticut, the clumsy ostentation, the true

hospitality, the warm-hearted show, fuss, and uproar of the wealthy New Yorkers. Then the quiet, grave wags of the New Jersey people. Then, the staid cold impudence, the sober vanity, the singular good sense, the insupportable method of the Pennsylvanians; the nothingness of the Delaware-men, who are, like everybody else, wherever they may happen to be, the self-satisfied, indolent, gentlemanly, supercilious Marylander (or Middle-ender, as he is called at home, partly because Maryland is one of the middle States, and partly because the sound of Middle-ender is quite near enough to that of Marylander, for every-day use, with a very indolent people in a warm climate); the hot and peremptory Virginian, full of generous blood, which he is ready to pour out, like his generous wine, *for* anybody or *with* anybody, caring no great matter which; ready, like the Irishman, to quarrel, or drink, fight, or laugh, with anybody on either side of the house; a prodigal in everything,—life, money, talent, and character; a boy at his birth, something more than a child, for he has authority over men before he is able to wag his head; a boy at his death, happen that when it may.

Then, if you turn off to the right in your pilgrimage, and cross the Alleghanies, you will encounter the great body of the Western people, every individual of whom, by the way, is a great body by himself; or, in other words, you will encounter the men of Kentucky (old Kentuck), of Tennesee and Ohio, of Illinois and Missouri, who are all very much alike: hardy, overgrown, brutal, and brave, with little or no refinement, great energy, stout hearts, and strong heads; the gigantic advance of that population, which is rolling onward for ever and ever, like a second universal deluge, toward the mighty Pacific. Or,

if you turn away to the left, when you have done with Virginia, the ancient dominion (so called because four out of the six chief magistrates of the feudal union have proceeded from old Virginia), you will meet, one after the other on your way, the dark, sallow, warm-hearted, showy, talkative, riotous North Carolinian; the more fervid, rash, and haughty South Carolinian, the indulgent, imperious, declamatory, absolute Georgian; the half-built, half-naturalised, half-educated Louisianian—all of the southern race, and the greater part "chuck-full" of impertinent valour, troublesome civility, fine words, eloquent ideas, good feeling, and boyish, headlong precipitation.

Thus much to give the reader a general idea of the varieties which are found in the American character. I have not exaggerated, I believe, and I am very certain that I have not intended to exaggerate, for I dislike every sort of caricature, which is not avowedly a caricature.*

Everybody knows the character of Mr. Mathews the comedian, for hearty, generous drollery. Everybody knows that, remarkable as he is for the richness, breadth, and humour of his grotesque portraitures, he is yet more so, perhaps, for scrupulous and particular fidelity. His Irishmen, for example, are not Irishmen in general, nor

* We insert this piece of criticism on our favourite droll on account of its origin. Though *an American* must be the best judge of the correctness of Mr. Mathews's delineation of the American character, we still think that the strictures of the party ridiculed ought to be received with a grain of allowance. All that we can say is, that if we have been taken in, *se non è vero*, it was so admirably imagined that we question whether we should have been half so much amused with the truth.—Ed.

the Irishmen of the stage, nor the Irishmen of songs or farces, or bad novels, but they are the Irishmen of this or that particular county; if not altogether true, they are quite sure to be more true than the absurd counterfeit Irishmen which are perpetrated on the stage. Of course, therefore, when we are told that Mathews, the celebrated comedian — a theatre in himself — has been to America on purpose; that he has got up a sort of peculiar entertainment for the very purpose of showing up the real brother Jonathans, or *genuine* Yankees of our earth, we should be justified in looking for uncommon truth, great individuality, and great precision, if nothing more, in his portrait of a New Englander, for the *genuine* Yankee, or brother Jonathan, which Mr. Mathews undertakes to show off, *is* a *New Englander*, as everybody knows, and yet, after the practice of a whole year, with leisure and opportunity enough the while for correcting any prodigious blunder into which he might have been led by haste, or by his great inexperience of the real Yankee character,* while performing his "Trip to America," the first fruit of his labour, out he comes with a new piece, in which, though it is got up, and brought forth deliberately, after the practice and observation of a whole year (not in America, it is true, but in Great Britain, where those who learn to swim on a table may learn to study the Yankee character to great advantage), he puts off upon the multitude of this country for a New Englander, a true brother Jonathan, or, in other words, a "*genuine* Yankee," a fellow that proves to be a negro dealer and a slave-holder, and while he wears a large straw hat, a sealskin waistcoat, and a heavy greenish brown, or brownish green cloth

* He was in America but a few months, and among the real Yankees, or brother Jonathans, but a few weeks at most.—A. M.

coat, reaching to his feet, brings a negro for sale into Great Britain, walks the stage as if the world were his own, talks much about liberty and equality, shakes hands with everybody that comes near him, wallops the "nigger," whenever he gets "mad" about anything, or anybody, talks politics with a servant of the individual to whom he has brought letters of introduction, declares that he was "*raised in Varmount*," "born all along shore," and says, "*I reckon, I guess, I calculate, en-quiry, to home*," &c.

Now, honest and faithful as Mr. Mathews undoubtedly is, good-humoured as he is, and exact as he generally is in the rich portraiture of individual or national character, there was nothing at Bartholomew Fair, to my knowledge, either last year, when it was crowded with wonders in every possible shape, or this year, when there was a Yahoo, or a mermaid in every booth, and you could not lift up a ragged bit of drapery without surprising a pair of undoubted giants, or the largest man alive, packed away, *tête-à-tête*, with a dwarf, the smallest ever heard of, who had been exhibited all over Europe, or he 'd "forfeit a shilling to everybody as wan't satisfied," absolutely nothing to equal the native *New Englander* of Mr. Mathews, nothing to be compared with his native Yankee, as a matter of humbug or mischief. "The wild American brethren, imported by particular desire, and allowed to be the greatest curiosities in the world!" "the Chinese Lady;" "the real Nero, the largest lion that ever was, tame as a lap-dog, larger than the largest cart-horse, having a throat like a turnpike gate, with every hair as big as a broomstick, and every tooth like a millstone! the *very* Wallace what *fit* the dogs!"—"the Circassian, caught wild in the great woods of America, whiter than snow, with pink eyes, and silver hair!"—"all alive! a penny a piece! all alive!" were nothing to the real *Brother Jona-*

than, "caught" in the woods of America by Mr. Mathews, and "brought out," with much trouble, and great expense, at the English Opera House,* about a twelvemonth ago, where he was exhibited, night after night, and week after week, to overflowing houses.

I would not say all this, were it not, in my deliberate opinion, a serious duty, for I attribute no bad intention to Mr. Mathews whatever; but I know the people of America, and I know, that until they are much better understood here, these very absurd caricatures will pass for portraits. They have already among the great mass of the people, and would yet, perhaps, among the better informed, were it not for a few native Yankees, who are to be met with every day in the streets of London, without being set upon by the boys on account of their speech, their garb, carriage, or behaviour. It is high time to take Mr. Mathews to task. His portraiture of the Yankee is generally misunderstood here, and he knows it. He knows very well, that a wretched caricature, which he got up in a frolic, is received in a pernicious way by the multitude here, and yet he persists in multiplying the copies. He knows in his own heart—I say this without qualification—he knows, and has known it for a whole year, that his *Jonathan* is a very poor and very feeble counterpart, unworthy of America, unworthy of Mr. Mathews as an actor, and altogether unworthy of his country. It is untrue, and he knows it, in all the great points which go to make up either a good portrait or a good caricature; it is neither one thing nor another; it is neither a likeness nor a picture. Mr. Mathews, therefore, cannot complain, or cannot with propriety, if one of that people, whom he

* In the aforesaid afterpiece, called "Jonathan in England."
A. M.

has been showing up for so long a time without a rebuke, should, after the forbearance of a twelvemonth or so,* undertake to show him up in return. There is no other way left. I would laugh, as my countrymen do, and as I did for the first year, but laughing won't do; we are called upon to *prove* that Mr. Mathews has caricatured us in a wretched style, and that is no laughing matter. He has had full swing, fair play, full houses, and a fair profit, I hope, for his labour. It is now my turn. I will be heard. I am a native Yankee, and I cannot help saying to Mr. Mathews that we are tired of being laughed at after such a clumsy fashion. But let me lay my finger on a few of the particulars in which Mr. Mathews has erred egregiously. I might say, to be sure, look about you; I might ask the people of this country to call to mind the Americans, or Yankees, whom they have met with, and judge for themselves about the truth of Mr. Mathews's portraiture; but, as few real Yankees are ever seen here, and as they are chiefly seen by the merchants and sailors of this country, there would be but a very few persons here able to judge of the American or Yankee character by personal acquaintance with it, and of these few there would not be one, perhaps, who might not with propriety imagine that native Yankees at home are a different race from the native Yankees who travel, and of course, that Mr. Mathews, whose fidelity and power he is

* About a twelvemonth ago I had occasion to speak of his "Trip to America," and of his *Jonathan* also, but I spoke of both as bits of absurd pleasantry, with a few capital touches in them. If they had passed for jokes, I should not have taken this trouble, but as they have not, and are still viewed seriously by the multitude, I shall contrive to expose the absurdity of both whenever I think it worth my while.

acquainted with, has hit off about as good a likeness of the real brother Jonathan as he has of the Irishman or Scotchman, or Frenchman, who appear to be a part of himself, a part of his perambulating corps of oddities.

It would not be enough to ask this question, or appeal to facts generally known, while engaged with Mr. Mathews, and so I shall adopt another course: I will enumerate a few of the great errors, which, with ordinary care, might have been easily avoided by him.

The *straw hat*, for example, which Mr. Mathews's he-*Yankee* appears in, was *never* worn, I dare say, in America, with such a garb as Mr. Mathews wears with it, and is hardly ever seen to the east of New York city, never, I might say, except in the heat of summer, about the wharfs, and among the wealthy merchants, or dashing lads of the larger sea-ports; where it is the mark of high fashion or downright foppery. It is very common, to be sure, in the city of New York, where Mr. Mathews arrived, and where he stayed for a long while to study the character of the Yankees who dwell far north of New York, but is worn there with light summer clothes, or at least with a town-made coat, and is never met with even then except in the yellow fever season, a little before and a little after. The sealskin, or fur waistcoat, may, *possibly*, have been *heard* of by Mr. Mathews as the peculiarity of somebody somewhere,—a madman or a humorist; but of a truth, it is no more a part of the New Englander's garb than a suit of tar and feathers, or a sheepskin would be. The colour, material, and fashion of the dress are true, very true indeed for one species of the New England *farmer*, but are quite absurd for a slave-holder, a slave-merchant, or a slave-dealer, and are more than absurd if looked upon as at all characteristic of a "real Yankee;" but Mr. Mathews has made his *Jonathan* a

real Yankee, a native New Englander, and, what is more, while he makes him a slave-holder, he has "located" his birth-place in Vermont, where, oddly enough, there *never* was either a slave or a slave-holder. In each of the other New England States,* all of which are now at open war with slavery, and all of which are free from it in every way, there have been slaves at one period or another, but in the State which he has hit upon, oddly enough, as I have said before, there *never* has been either a slave or a slave-holder.

So much for this part of Mr. Mathews's portrait of a genuine Yankee. But I have not half done; for while he appears to have been "raised" in Vermont, our Yankee adds, that he was born "all along shore." Now Vermont is nowhere near the shore; it is on the Canada frontier in the backwoods of America; and the people who are born "all along shore," as they would have strangers believe, are of Massachusetts, on the Atlantic frontier, north of Cape Cod.

Again: the habit of shaking hands, which, by the way, is more common here than it is anywhere in America, to my knowledge, for it occurs between people both at meeting and separating here, when they are not even well acquainted, so far as I can perceive, and are not of the same sex. But what I was going to say is, that in America the people who shake hands with everybody live at the north, while those who buy and sell "niggers" live at the south. Yet more: the habit of accenting the word *inquiry* not on the second, but on the first syllable, is confined altogether to the Middle States, if not altogether

* Except Maine, which is a new State, carved out of Massachusetts.

to a part of Maryland and a part of Pennsylvania. It may occur in the south, and I have heard it from a Kentuckian, but I am quite sure that no man ever heard it in the north from a native Yankee. The habit of saying that a boy was "*raised*," instead of saying that he was "brought up," is an absurdity with which the New Englander twits the southern people. It is never heard in the north. Mr. Mathews's *New Englander* says, "*I calculate, I reckon, I guess; to* home" (for *at* home), &c.; now, the southern people say, "I reckon;" the western people, "I calculate;" and the northern people, or Yankees, "*to* home—I guess," &c. And a part of these very words are so peculiar and exclusive, that in America they are looked upon as the chief ear-marks whereby the people of one part of the country are distinguished from those of another: and yet Mr. Mathews, whose fidelity, and quick perception of truth, like his intuitive perception of the ridiculous, are proverbial, has crowded all these words together, and put them into the mouth of the same individual. What if I were to get up a character in my way, and make him swear and scold, now in Welsh, by St. Patrick! now in Irish, by St. Andrew! in Scotch, by St. George! or in English, by St. David!—now, with a "Plaise yer honor's glory?" now with a "Dee'l tak' ye, mun;" "Heer iss te goot ash;" or, a "Demme, that's your sort!" and call it a native Englishman, prepared by myself, or under my own eye, from actual observation?—what would you say of me?

It would be easy to prove that Mr. Mathews has not only missed a large part of the delicate shadows, and sharp marks, or minutiæ, that go to make up a fine portrait, while copying the native Jonathan, but, that he has even failed in preserving the broad and obvious peculiari-

ties which are indispensable to a spirited caricature,—to such a caricature as might have been made with half the powers of Mr. Mathews, had he been less precipitate. By hurrying, he has got up a Jonathan who bears little or no resemblance to the native New Englander, and much less to the native American of the south; and, what is much worse, in every way, he has brought forth a combination of peculiarities, moral and social, such as were never seen together in the same person, I do not say in America, but anywhere — I do not say while he was in America, but since the world was made.

In a few particulars, however, Mr. Mathews has been happy and vigorous. A part of the language, a part of the character, and all the tone, if we look upon the sketch as a sort of individual, not a national, portrait, are very good, and very true. A little more courage, however, a little more hearty good-will in delivering his blows, would not have been amiss. They would have told better for both parties, nay, for all parties. If you strike at all, strike hard.

Many a powerful hit was given by Mr. Mathews; but all were given, as it were, by a sort of accident, as if he had rather not provoke a return; as if, to say all in a word, having a heavy hand, a good subject, a strong arm, and a solid heart, he could not help, if he hit his man at all—whatever was his inclination—he could not help hitting him hard.

But enough:—The *Brother Jonathan* of Mr. Mathews, take him altogether, is about as fair a specimen of the real *North American character*, as an accumulation of all the absurd peculiarities, national, individual, and provincial, of the English, Irish, Welsh, and Scotch would be of the British character, if they were all worked up together, and brought forth upon the public stage in the shape of a *John Bull*.

False notions concerning a whole people, whom we are continually meeting in the great business of life, on the great thoroughfares of sea and earth,—whatever those notions may be, whether serious or trivial, and however they may have been caught up, whether in malice, or good-humour, deliberately, or in haste, or in mischief, or in sport, are always more or less injurious to ourselves, and more or less prejudicial in the cause of humanity.

A Native Yankee.

To this attack Mr. Mathews made the following reply, in the same periodical publication :*—

Sir,

Having read, in your last number, an article, at the head of which my name appeared in letters alarmingly large for my nerves, written with the express intention of exposing the "errors which prevail" in England respecting North America (and into which errors I am stated to have led the public), I feel myself called upon, averse as I am from publishing in reply to any animadversions upon me, to enter into a sort of defence of my character — not as an actor, for nothing would induce me to obtrude myself upon the public in that capacity — but as a man charged with wilfully misrepresenting the American character.

The writer of the article professes to be a "native Yankee," and he directly accuses me of uttering, knowing to be forged, certain counterfeit portraits and clumsy absurd caricatures of his countrymen, thereby ridiculing the whole nation, and having the tendency of being "prejudicial to the cause of humanity." He asserts (and I fully agree with him) that errors prevail here

* The European Magazine.

upon the subject: but he adds, that to me "a large part of the errors are owing." This is rather hard, and, I think, rather ungrateful to a man who has taken such pains as I have, to remove them, both in public and in private; who has been twitted by a part of the English press with uttering whining, mawkish, sickly sentiments in favour of America, merely because he intended to return to the country (this was liberal!). The "native Yankee" asserts that my portrait of the Yankee is generally misunderstood here, and that "I know it." He says, I know in my "*own heart* that it is a poor and feeble counterfeit, unworthy of America, unworthy of me," &c. He certainly has been polite enough to say that he attributes no bad intention to me. This is like saying of a man—he is a liar, he has wilfully misrepresented facts, he has uttered forged notes and counterfeit coin; but I believe he had no bad intention. However, I am not offended.

When I first read the article I am certain that the closest observer would have said my

"Countenance was more in sorrow than in anger;"

and, notwithstanding the soreness I feel at being charged with wilfully misrepresenting, I allow the general fairness and candour of the article: and it is the temperate and conciliatory tone of the letter, and the gentlemanly spirit it evinces, that has induced me to reply to it; and which I resolved upon for two reasons. First, to assure all those who may have been "led into error by me," that I, generally speaking, agree with the writer in his opinions concerning the country; and, secondly, as it gives me an opportunity of replying to attacks made upon me by a portion of the American press, to which I have disdained an answer, and which I never condescended to notice on their own account. Could I have anticipated that I should

ever be provoked to defend myself from the charges brought against me, I should have preserved some of these elegant *morceaux*, as remarkable for their truth and correctness, as for the choice and beautiful language in which they are clothed. Indeed, I lament that I cannot quote them as polished specimens of the language common to both countries; but they were consigned to the flames, after they had been read to me by a "d——d good-natured friend," as Sir Fretful says. "Vagabond, itinerant mimic, a silly buffoon, who, in return for hospitalities and kindness received, has ridiculed the national peculiarities;" &c. "This wretch, who was applauded beyond his merits," &c. I shall only utter three words, at the conclusion of my letter, to those *gentlemen* of the press who call names.

But, as there are many matter-of-fact sort of people (and Heaven defend me from all such!) who believe, in the simplicity of their hearts, that I have been as ungrateful as I am declared to be by some of these worthies, let it be understood, then, that I undertake this task for them; and that I address myself to those whose good opinion I value, wishing to set the matter right in their eyes as far as I am able. I am induced to do this in consequence of the article in your magazine; which, from its very appearance of fairness, is calculated to effect the mischief which these worthies hoped to effect, but which their own vulgarity and abuse, I am confident, defeated in the eyes of those whose good opinion I wished to retain.

Now, Mr. Editor, what "*I*" chiefly complain of is "misrepresentation;" and, to quote the "Native Yankee," I attribute no bad intention to him; but, where I wish to set him right, and, through him, my friends in America, is, that he ingeniously (perhaps by mistake) mixes up the characters represented in "Jonathan in England" with my

portraits of American character in my own Entertainment, called "The Trip to America;" and though, from the way in which they are jumbled together by him, those who read the article in America will believe that all "the errors into which I have led" the English, all the wilful misrepresentations, all the clumsy caricature—for with such proceedings am I "charged withal"—form a part of what I must be allowed to call my Entertainment. I do not mean to say that he absolutely asserts it; but he has not explicitly distinguished them.

Now I beg it may be distinctly understood that I hold myself personally responsible for all I uttered as an individual exhibitor in the "Trip to America;" but I am no more responsible for the tendency of the character of *Jonathan W. Doubikins* in the farce, or the effects, or the errors it may produce, than Mr. Cooke was responsible for the sentiments uttered by him in *Sir Pertinax M'Sycophant* to the Scottish nation; or my friend Liston, for his droll delineation of *Lubin Log*, to the citizens of London and Southwark. With as much propriety might a "native" Scotchman have written against the former, charging him with having led the English into their errors against his countrymen; or a "native" cockney have taken up the cudgel for all the inhabitants of Tooley-street in the Borough, for the ridicule brought upon them (and all England) by his faithful portrait of a vulgar cockney. I have no doubt there are many of my ever-to-be-dreaded matter-of-fact people who say, "Really, Liston should not insinuate that all the people in London pronounce the *v* for the *w*, and leave out the *h* before the vowels." *

* I must relate one little anecdote here to illustrate this observation, and to prove how *blind* a person may become for want of *ear* (a defect I suspect my *native* of, from his assertion that *en*quiry is not the common pronunciation, and *raised* for "born,"

The Americans laughed heartily at *Lubin Log*—am I to infer that they took that for a portrait of all Englishmen? Cooke's *Sir Pertinax* was enthusiastically applauded there —they were pleased to approve of my *Morbleu*, and be amused with my ridicule of cockney slang, Scotch and Welsh dialects, and Irish brogues. Are the North Americans, or the Yankees of the East, to be the only people in the world that are to be exempt from such representations? Must they, exclusively, be secure from "showing up?"

Your correspondent, after pronouncing my portraits to be counterfeit, allows that a part of the language, a part of the character, and "all" the tone — if we look upon the sketch as a sort of individual, not a national, portrait, are very good, and very true." Why, who, in the name of common sense, (excepting your correspondent,) ever even insinuated that *Jonathan* (for to this one character he sticks, like a rusty weathercock) was a national portrait? I do not inform you, Mr. Editor, nor my accuser, for he knows better, as he says of me, "in his heart,"— but my friends across the Atlantic — that I asserted the contrary in *my own* account of my visit to the country. "He knows," and he ought to have quoted me fairly, if he will write from memory, that my explanation of a real Yankee was a counterpart of my own description. Do I not make *Mr. Pennington* (whom I have contrasted with *Jack Topham*, as a "sensible, gentle-

confined to one State). An elderly female, a "native" cockney, said, in my presence, that Liston went too far in his pronunciation in saying "hoax" for *oax* (*she* meant the reverse); and added that she never heard anybody speak *so bad* as he. A few minutes after, she called the servant, and said, "John, this { *ash* / hash } is cold — take it down, and tell the cook to { *eat* / heat } it, and bring it up again!" How could this lady be a judge of Liston's portrait?

manly, well-informed American," defeating in argument a silly, impertinent, English coxcomb) set him right when he calls all Americans "Yankees?" Do I not put in his mouth the information that the people of New York and Philadelphia, and others more south, themselves, call those of the eastern states "Yankees?" Do I not "show up" *Topham* and *Bray* as much more ridiculous personages than any American in my "Trip," excepting *Doubikins?* I give him as a specimen of a *real Yankee;* and if the "Native" means to assert that the squirrel story is not *genuine*, and that the phraseology is not pure and correct, I assert that *it is.* I say boldly, and without vanity, if he believe it to be incorrect, I will back my ear, and observation of peculiarities of pronunciation against his. But here he would insinuate that I make *Jonathan Doubikins* out a "negro-dealer, and a slave-holder, raised in Vermont, born all along shore there," &c. I have one short answer to this—It is false! I did nothing of the kind—not *one* of the charges are true. I will not retort, and say, "he knows it;" but he has a bad memory, or he has not the disposition to do me justice. I introduce *Jonathan W. Doubikins*, for the purpose of telling the story of the squirrel, which was furnished by Americans as an eastern story, knowing full well that I intended to make use of it in England. I do not mention, or hint at, the words "slave or negro-dealer," during the whole description of his character. I never say one syllable about "Vermont," or, "all along shore there." The words are these: "When I lived *to* Boston." * —"When my uncle Ben lived *to* Boston, he called on me

* Will he have the impudence to tell me they do not say, "lived to Boston?" If the "Native" think this disgraceful, I can inform him that the people in the West of England have the same peculiarity.

one day, and he says, says he, Jonathan, says he,—for he always called me Jonathan, though I was baptized Jonathan W. down to Newhaven I believe." Not another syllable, upon my most sacred word of honour, my dear Editor—not one monosyllable, my dear friends in New York, Philadelphia, &c. on my oath, is ever uttered about his residence or birth-place, either in my own Entertainment—where I only am responsible—or in the farce called "Jonathan in England," (observe this, I pray, I entreat) where I never will allow I am responsible. I do not say where he was born, but where he was baptized. He might have been born, or "raised," (for they do say "raised" in every part of the country I have visited, be assured, Mr. Editor)—he might have been born at Newington-butts, near London, and still christened at Newhaven.

In the afterpiece, the third or personation act, I introduced a poor persecuted runaway negro,—for I took a fancy to the race: I could not help thinking, with Uncle Toby, a negro has a soul—God's image, though carved in ebony. This character I called *Agamemnon;* the scene Natchitoches. Fifty dollars are offered for his apprehension by *Doubikins,* who goes on a visit to that place, and says he is in search of his "help" (observe this). He says he purchased him of *Uncle Ben*; and when *Uncle* told him he had a nigger to sell, and says, "Do you want one?" &c. *Jonathan* replies, "Oh, yes; for I have more than the other 'helps' can do." Does this prove him a dealer or driver? The dealer is his Uncle Ben. "This is the head and front of my offending." Where *I* was accountable have I not made out my case so far?

Now for the farce, the great bone of contention, the sore place. Mr. Arnold engaged me at the English Opera House as an actor, on the most liberal terms; such terms that I

could not conscientiously decline performing any character he wished. I was engaged for a few nights only. The only new character prepared for me was *Jonathan W. Doubikins*, with whom my visitors "At Home" were so amused that Mr. Peake thought he would tell well as the hero of a farce. If I had refused to act the part, from any such delicate feelings as actuate your correspondent, Mr. Arnold must have lost considerably by my engagement. I will not enter into what scruples I *did* feel about it. My first consideration was to act justly by my employer. I thought I had said and done enough to satisfy the most fastidious American, in my compliments to them "At Home." I was informed all those who had heard my "Trip" were satisfied; and I was weak enough to believe and hope that, after I had paid my just tribute to their good qualities, we might in the drama be allowed to indulge in a little harmless laugh at the peculiarities of some of the natives, as we have done with other nations, without offence. I am quite sure none was ever contemplated by me. The author constructed a most ingenious plot, and applied to me to furnish him with some phraseology, peculiarities of pronunciation, &c. I was at a great distance from London, and preferred furnishing him with materials ready prepared than be at the trouble of copying from my own memoranda:—a vocabulary published in America, and a comedy written by General Humphries, *an American!* called "The Yankee in England." From this latter Mr. Peake copied many of the oddly-turned phrases and sentences that I had not already uttered in the character. Mr. Peake has given me permission to make this known; but I must, in justice to him, say, that the whole of the plot, and every sentence in the other characters, were his own original invention—and a most amusing and ingenious farce I shall always think it.

But, whatever offensive matter my "Native Yankee" can discover in this, he must not attribute to us. The onus must remain with General Humphries. Wicked man, to caricature his own countrymen in such a wretched style and clumsy fashion, and lead the English into error! Fie, fie, Humphries! He says that the farce was produced after a year's consideration, "got up, and brought forth deliberately." Mark how plain a tale shall set down this "Native." I arrived in town one day before I commenced my engagement on the 2nd of September, the farce was read on the 3rd, and acted in four or five days afterwards. So that, instead of twelve months' thought and preparation, I had not more than one week; and the author did not hit upon the thought above a month before it was acted.

Now I have already stated I could not refuse to act in this piece. I thought it capital fun — I pity those who do not think so sincerely. The public certainly agreed with me; and, as he allows, it was acted to overflowing houses. But if my friend — (I wish he had signed his name, or initials, or X. Y. Z., for I don't like to be calling him "Yankee" so often, though he calls me "counterfeit") — but if he imagines the people of England are so besotted, so ignorant, as to believe that I ever intended *Jonathan* as "a fair specimen of the North American character," or that they believe him to be so, I must assure him that they are not such idiots, such matter-of-fact, melancholy, moping, inquiring fellows, as to think it a matter of importance whether a straw-hat was born in New York, or raised in Virginia or not, or whether an ugly, *Hardham's-thirty-seven*-coloured * coat is worn by a slave-holder, driver, dealer, or a real Yankee

* The name of a once popular *snuff*, brought into fashion by Garrick's mention of it on the stage.—A. M.

— they are not "the people," thank Heaven! or what would become of me? No, believe me, there is no such mischief done as you suppose; and those "who meet me on the great thoroughfare of sea and earth" will only laugh at *Jonathan's* oddities, be assured.

I have made use of a strong phrase, I find, in looking over my letter; but I will not retract. I will prove that, even in this farce the assertion is not true respecting negro-dealers. I am afraid his ear is incorrect, or his memory treacherous—but he really should have had a certificate of their correctness before he brought such grave accusations against me.

Mr. Ledger, the Liverpool merchant, to whom *Doubikins* brings a letter of introduction, inquires where he was born? His reply is, "Do you know where Newhaven is? well, it warn't there." "Why did you ask then?" says *Ledger*. *Jonathan* answers, "Because uncle Ben was born there, though I warn't. I was born, as I have heard, in Varmont state, or thereabouts—*just as the Indian said* he was born at Nantucket, Cape Cod, and all alongshore there." There is not one sentence in the whole piece that alludes either to his being a negro-dealer or slave-holder. The first time the negro is mentioned is thus: "I have brought Aggy to look after my turtle." He then says to the waiter, "Do you want to buy a nigger? my uncle Ben *told me* I could dispose of him in England." After this he feels compunction, and says, "I do not much like to part with the nigger, he is a spry, active help; but I want the dollars: perhaps, though, he'll meet with a boss that won't larrup him."

Would "a dealer" be so ignorant as to suppose he could sell slaves in England? And, if he were, would he provide himself with only one for such a purpose? The fact is,

nobody but my sensitive "native Yankee" ever believed him to be a dealer. There is not a word throughout the piece on the subject, after the first scene, excepting in the second act, where once he repeats, "Will you buy a nigger?" and *Jonathan* informs the waiter that he could not dispose of him in New York, Philadelphia, &c., as there is no slave-dealing there. I am gravely told that there are no slaves, or slave-holders in Vermont. Why I know it as well as the "Yankee," and I have never hinted at it. But having proved, I trust satisfactorily and positively, that I did not locate the character there, or all along shore, what becomes of all his criticism upon my blunders and misrepresentations? Have I not proved I am the "better counterfeit?" The fact is, that I was prepared for these splitters of hairs, these breakers of small flies on large wheels, these matter-of-fact folks, who make trifles, light as air, of importance, that I cautiously avoided "locating" *Jonathan* at all, and left the matter in doubt. But, dear Editor, (for I love you for calling me your favourite droll,) is it not hard to be thus misquoted and garbled? Now how would he like it, if I gave a garbled extract from his account of his own country, and cautiously left out all that qualified his satire. Egad! I will too—he has acted so by me.

Read, my American friends, what he says of you, in order to remove the error into which I have led the English. "In New England," he says, "you will one day encounter a personage, half hypocrite, half puritan, praying and cheating in the same breath—puffing his ware and praising his Maker to the very same tune—with a broad-brimmed quaker hat, &c.—two or three watches for ever in sight—and a flashy waistcoat, for sale, over a coarse every-day one; always ready to preach or pray—to sell or

swap, or truck or trade—to pitch a hymn in the street, or pitch a copper in church. Another day you would fall in with a huge brawn, white-headed fellow, who, under a simple speech, and a look of stupid, foolish, good-natured curiosity, would conceal a temper so sharp, so inquisitive, so watchful, that, before you well knew what he was about, you would find that he had over-reached you, while you were most upon your guard; or, as they have it in their country, when they have outwitted a very cautious traveller, 'that he had guessed you up a tree.' After leaving Connecticut, you encounter the clumsy ostentation, the fuss and uproar of the wealthy New Yorkers—then the staid cold impudence, the sober vanity, the singular good sense, the insupportable method of the Pennsylvanians—the nothingness of the Delaware men—the self-satisfied, supercilious Marylander—the hot and peremptory Virginian, ready, like the Irishman, to quarrel or drink, fight or laugh; a prodigal in everything, life, talents, money, and character—the dark, sallow, showy, talkative, riotous North Carolinian—the more fervid, rash and haughty South Carolinian—the indulgent, furious, declamatory, absolute Georgian—the half-built, half-naturalized, half-educated Louisianian, all of the southern race, and the greater part, chuck full of impertinent valour, and boyish headlong precipitation."

My friends in America will surely exclaim, "Defend us from our friends!" Now, if I had uttered any of these "varieties of the American character," what would have been said of me? I have left out all the qualifying sentences of the Sketches of Character designedly; all that he has written in praise of his countrymen I have expunged. Am I not justified in this? He cautiously conceals what I have uttered that is complimentary to the American character.

Now to the minor points. I shall give an unqualified contradiction to several broad assertions, hazarding boldly my perceptions and close observation against even a native. He says, "The straw-hat was never worn in America (*I dare say*) with such a garb as Mr. Mathews wears it with." I dare *swear* it has been. I *will* swear, I took a sketch of my dress, to the minutest point, from a native, with whom I travelled in a steam-boat from New York to Albany. "The seal-skin or fur waistcoat" (I don't wear either, but that is nothing with my critic) is no more a part of the New-Englander's dress, &c." Now mark, he says, "The colour, fashion, &c. of the dress is true, *very true*, for one species of the New-England *farmer*, but are quite absurd for a slave-holder." Again and again I say he never was a slave-holder but in the distempered imagination of my friend with the bad memory—and how can he know he is *not* a farmer? I have never asserted that *he is not*. I have not designated him at all in my "Trip;" but I declare solemnly that, whenever I have been asked if the dress I wore in *Jonathan* was common in America, I have replied, "No: the man from whom I copied the dress was a farmer."

The fact is, that the Americans in the great cities dress so exactly like ourselves, that I was puzzled to find any characteristic dress that would be effective for the stage; and I knew that when "At Home" something would be expected from me. I have seen many such dresses even in New York; but I grant they had the same effect that a smock frock has in the streets of London. Still, was it not fair for me to copy such dresses as I really saw worn? Nay, if I had seen but one specimen in the country, I contend it was allowable. (Did my "Native Yankee" ever see a man in blue breeches in Tooley-

street?* Perhaps not; but Liston has, I have authority to say). Is it to be supposed that the English cared a rush whether it was the dress of a farmer or a slave-holder, or whether the wearer was "raised" in Vermont, in Kentucky, or Tenessee, or Pacatabigo, or Commenessaw, or *Hypgbrunpxf?* and would they have known the difference if they had been informed? It is splitting hairs —from the straw-hat to the nonsense about shaking hands —it is silly quibbling, and the "Native" might have written an article in your Magazine every month during the next year, if he had not placed my name in such capital letters and formidable shape, and, by absolute untruths, endeavoured to confirm the Americans in the "errors into which they have been led"—about me. Now, on the same principle that his argument respecting the dress becomes futile, my simple assertion, which I defy him to controvert, that *Jonathan* is never designated by anybody but himself as a "slave-holder" "raised all alongshore," totally destroys, completely dissipates, every tittle of his strictures upon me. Having raised all his charges on a false foundation, they must necessarily fall to the ground.

Now, Mr. Editor, though I feel that "I am bestowing all my tediousness upon your worship," pray allow me a page or so, in order to afford me an opportunity of quoting a few passages from the "Trip," for the information of my American friends who have not witnessed the representation. They have only read garbled extracts,—nay, more, they have read matter, which they may have believed was uttered by me, which I never saw till put forth in those

* A matter-of-fact friend of mine, said, "Love, Fun, and Fire is a droll farce." "Love, Law, and Physic, you mean," said I. "Yes—but really Liston goes too far in *Lubin Log*. Really, I think him indecent."—"Indecent! you astonish me: how? where?"—"Oh, those blue breeches!!"

catch-*six*-penny publications* which are imposed upon the public as mine, and some of which do not contain one regular sentence as uttered by me.

They ought to hear them—and my "Native" opponent should have informed them that, in allusion to the Fawkes's, Fearons, and other tourists, I observed, "I cannot, as far as my observation extended, compliment the majority of them on the justness of their strictures. They seemed to me to have left England with visionary views and soured prospects, to hunt a runaway clerk, to get in a desperate debt, to build a brewery at Boston, &c. Disappointment has generated disgust—all seems yellow to the jaundiced eye, and they have cast their own packet of pique on the backs of the inhabitants."

Mr. Pennington observes, "It is much to be lamented that only the poor, the busy, and the speculative visit our shores—the baffled trader, who expects to find a palace of liberty in the back settlements—the jaundiced politician, who looks for perfection in a young country. Sir, we are but an infant state; and, of course, we have the errors of

* These gentry are quite aware of the injunction I obtained in the Court of Chancery to prevent their frauds. They dare not publish what I really write; therefore employ Grub-street authors to fabricate some comments upon one of the songs which they put forth as sung by me, copied into the British Press from a Boston paper, in which I was severely handled for singing trash that conveyed no notion of real American manners, &c. I had never seen nor heard the song until it had returned from Boston. Now, though I know it is not necessary for those sagacious critics and kind-hearted men, Messrs. Buckingham of Boston, and Coleman of New York, to witness a performance that they *intend* to abuse, yet, for the information of the liberal part of the press, who are inclined to "speak me fair," I have thought it necessary to assure them that all the publications purporting to be my "Trip to America," are spurious.

infancy; but we have our virtues too. An enemy looks only for the former. Ah! Sir, when will a traveller come from your country who is inclined to speak us fair — who will tell of our kindness and hospitality, as well as of our pride and our prejudice? The pen stabs deeper than the stiletto, and severs friendship more surely than the sword. Oh! golden would that pen be, and plucked from the wing of peace, that would tell how heartily, how truly our hearts beat towards England! how ardently we long to be leagued in generous brotherhood!"

I had been but a few hours in Baltimore before I found on my table half a pack of cards, from Mr. This, and Dr. That, Counsellor W., &c. though I had not, as yet, delivered one letter of introduction. This surely speaks volumes to those who doubt American politeness and hospitality, and needs no comment from me, I am sure. I could quote many others; but I shall now only instance the concluding sentiment, spoken above forty nights in one season, invariably applauded by Americans and English, whom I have "led into error."

Mr. Pennington.—"Remember to speak us fair, Mr. Mathews. Have your joke, enjoy your mirth, laugh at our faults and our foibles, as you have at those of other countries; but let your ridicule be tempered by good-nature; and in representing one country to the other, do not forget that we ought to be cherished to mutual love."

"I will treasure what you have said, Sir, in my heart of hearts. England and America are now friends, — nay brothers,—and perish the man, say I, that would embitter their affections. Even I, much as I love mirth, and lightly as pass my volatile hours, should prize no fame, no achievement so dearly as that of being the humble instrument of furthering the friendship between the two countries, and standing, as it were, a comma 'tween their amities. May

the two lands have but one heart, and nothing but the billows of the Atlantic divide England from America!"

These sentiments I did not utter coldly, and I believe that those who witnessed the representation will do me the justice to say that they were spoken by one who evidently appeared to feel sincerely upon the subject. I *was* sincere. I defy the malice of my bitterest enemy to say that I have ever uttered one sentiment in private that was not consistent with my public declaration. Knowing, then, the sincerity of my feeling toward the country—the gratitude I have ever felt for my reception in public as well as private, which I shall always remember, and of which I have never failed to express my warmest sense in every society in which I have mingled, the *mens conscia recti* will support me against any attacks that may be made upon me by the American press, or by misrepresentations at home. I can refer to some of the most respectable inhabitants, merchants of Liverpool, Dublin, Bristol, Manchester, Glasgow, &c. that I have confirmed by my private testimony what I have publicly said in praise of the virtues of the country.

I had the honour of sitting at the same table with two of his Majesty's ministers. I stated how much pleasure it gave me to inform them that I had scarcely ever departed from a dinner-table in America, where English were present, that the health of the King of England was not drunk in a bumper. I have flattered myself that I have been the means of reconciling rather than fomenting differences. Is it not hard, then, that it should be said that to me a large portion of the errors that exist here are to be attributed? I really was not aware that I was a man of such consequence before.

It is easy and safe to assert such things in print; but

whenever a man is bold enough to make such an assertion to my face, I shall reply simply thus — It is false! I have invariably and consistently spoken in praise of the country.

I have never deviated from this direct, open, honest, and conscientious course. This is the first opportunity I have had of replying to calumny; and if, after this declaration, the Americans will not allow me to take the same liberty with their peculiarities (and which have literally not exceeded the ridicule of mere intonation and pronunciation) that I have with French, Irish, Scotch, Welsh, and, above all, the English (who are, I think, the most ridiculous persons in my "Trip,") I say, if they cannot afford to be laughed at a little, after all I have said in their praise, why, really, I cannot help it, and I do not care one *cent* whether they are offended or not. But I hope some one on their side of the water will assure the "Native" who defames them here, that they are not so weak.

Having thus *published* my defence, I promise you, Mr. Editor, *I never will do so any more;* and I hope this will induce you to insert all I have written, and forgive me this once. I am most anxious that all those in whose good opinion I wish to live should be acquainted with my real motives, my genuine sentiments. As to the venal scribblers who have defamed me from my first arrival in the country up to the present time, from Buckingham of Boston down to Dr. Coleman of New York, I answer them in the emphatic expressive words of George Colman the Younger, in his Preface to the "Iron Chest:"—Gentlemen, — "Pooh! Pish!! Pshaw!!!"

I am, dear Editor,

Your obedient Servant,

C. Mathews.

The following letter is from a brother collector and friend, the Rev. Charles Burney:—

TO C. MATHEWS, ESQ.

My dear Sir,

The Bullock* is arrived, and in rare good case; but though too lean to be ranked among the prize cattle, yet may not be entrusted to any casual drover.

The gout has been hard at me since the close of December, and has liberally comprised a Christmas-box and a new year's gift, under one and the same benefaction. Oh! these are rare economical times!

Can you dine with us on Sunday? I shall be at leisure from duty after half past one Dinner at half past four. If you should not find it convenient to favour us with your company then, I shall be able to get out next week, when I will leave this *falsetto* for you. Most glad shall I be to borrow, for my cousin to copy, Garrick in "The Roman Father," and in "Miss in her Teens," for they have escaped my researches, and the searchers whom I have employed. Always, my dear sir,

Yours very faithfully,

C. Burney.

Rectory House, Jan. 4th, 1826.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Abbotsford, Jan. 10th, 1826.

I fear you will have been much disappointed at not hearing from me to-day, but the punctilioes of the Edinburgh folks prevented my getting Sir Walter's letter until

* Portrait of an ancient actor of that name.

too late to write to you, so that I could hear while I remained here. They are so much more religious than any other of his Majesty's subjects, that a stranger who is not aware of their customs may wait for a letter about forty hours. A letter which arrived in Edinburgh at seven o'clock Saturday night, which in every other city in the kingdom would be delivered on Sunday morning, is kept until Monday. All this time I was in direful suspense.

The reason why I told you not to direct to Abbotsford without hearing from me was, that some doubt had been thrown upon my going there by my hearing that Sir Walter was very ill. On Sunday we dined at Mr. Scrope's, and I was mentioning my uneasiness about my letter and Sir Walter's illness, when I was cheered by the following communication: — "Oh! make yourself easy about that, for I had a letter from him yesterday, written on Friday, inviting me to meet you on Monday to dinner, and I shall be very happy to give you and your son seats in my carriage." You may suppose how my mind was set at rest; and here we are, in enchantment. It could not be, I knew, and therefore regret is useless; but I felt that if you had been with us, you would have been repaid for all miseries in getting here. It is a castle fit for the Magician of the North to inhabit.

Our reception was warm and kind after our cold and cheerless journey through a country covered with snow. Mr. Scrope, to my horror, took his own horses all the way, and we travelled about four miles an hour. However, it was luxury by comparison with our journey by any other means. I know not how you fare in the *sooth*, but to-day it is a white chaos, all snow above and below.

Very funny — ha, ha, ha! while I was writing as per

other side, Sir Watty came in and said, "Did not you say you wished to write to Edinburgh? If you do, it must be within half an hour." I left your letter to do so. Mr. Scrope, thinking it a sheet of blank paper, took it up, and wrote on, until turning over leaf, he saw my hand-writing. We had neither of us time to copy, so must run the risk of double postage.*

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Newcastle, Jan. 14th, 1826.

I fear you have been in a fidget about me, but I have been more uneasy, if possible. We were shut up by snow from communication with you. It is four miles to the post town from Abbotsford, and without a special messenger had been sent, for which I could not ask, I could not get a letter sent to you. The party broke up yesterday to our great grief. Sir Walter was obliged to go professionally to Edinburgh, and I was trundled into a cold post-chaise, to be conveyed into some road where coaches to Newcastle travel. Scott kindly sent Charlie in his own carriage to Selkirk, where he was to meet the mail. You may suppose what I felt after such a party, to be left quite alone for the first time. When I came to Kelso, I found the only coach that travelled from Friday till Sunday had been gone two hours. So I posted on into the mail road. On arriving at a lone bleak house, I was told that the only coach conveyance to Newcastle would arrive there at six next morning, so here I stayed. I remembered my night at Lille, though I was

* Mr. Scrope, since this book has been in the press, has written a most delightful work upon *Deer Stalking*.—A. M.

as cold here, and comforted myself by comparison; but I was obliged to sit in my great coat. Such a room! such eatables! *all* alone! We ought all to be forced from home, even you, into such miseries, to know how to value our blessings. How life can be worth preserving without comforts, I cannot understand. My economy forced me up at half-past five! O my fingers! and the waistcoat buttons, on a bleak muir in Scotland! Oh! all in the dark,—no fire,—only an ostler,—on the *chance* of a seat in the mail! Room for one. In I bundled; three of them confined within their own atmosphere all night. Phew! But here I am, thank God! and well, and feel my blessings in not sneezing and coughing all day, as other folks do. How is the weather with you?

All were delighted with Charles at Abbotsford. We "tumbled" every night, all fun. He has made lasting friends in Edinburgh. Scott is quite delighted with him, and so is Mr. Scrope. You ought to love me for the rest of my life for what I have suffered in "providing for my family" these last few days. My poor hip will not bear such weather as this.

C. MATHEWS.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Mr. Mathews's Return to London. — Letter from him to the Duke of Montrose: embarrassing Request. — Frequent Visits of the Duke and Duchess of Montrose to Mr. Mathews's "At Homes."—Zealous Support by Mr. Mathews of the Theatrical Fund. — Letter from Mr. Mathews to Mr. Richard Lane: illegible Names. — Mr. Mathews's seventh "At Home," at the English Opera-house. — Programme of the Entertainment. — Remarks on the Performance. — Letter from Dr. Kitchener to Mr. Mathews: the "Cook's Oracle," the "Housekeeper's Ledger."

On Mr. Mathews's return, to prepare for re-opening the English Opera-house, an unexpected and novel intimation embarrassed him exceedingly, and occasioned him to address to the Lord Chamberlain privately, in the following letter:—

TO HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF MONTROSE.

My Lord Duke,

On arriving in London for the purpose of completing the arrangements for my new entertainment, I have been thrown into the utmost confusion and alarm by the intelli-

gence which Mr. Arnold has communicated to me, that your Grace has called upon him for a written copy of the whole matter to be spoken by me, in order to receive your Lordship's licence. .

Without presuming to enter into the question whether an entertainment delivered wholly by one person can, by any possible construction, be deemed "an entertainment of the stage," I still beg leave most respectfully to state the extreme awkwardness of the position in which I am placed by this requisition.

In all my performances for so many years past, it has ever been customary for the several characters which I have selected to be arranged and strung together in something like the order of a story, by one or two other persons; that is to say, a plan has been laid out, which afforded the opportunity of introducing characters, anecdotes, and incidents which I have intended to delineate: but of these there are hundreds which have never yet been committed to writing, and of which, indeed, I could give no idea on paper. Your Grace has, I believe, more than once honoured my performance with your presence;, and your Lordship must, therefore, be aware how utterly impracticable the attempt would be to convey any idea, in writing, of the assumptions of character, the imitations of manner, and other peculiarities, of which it is composed.

These, it is well known, have never been *personal*, nor in any way offensive to any individual. On this I have always prided myself; and, when I state, that several of my entertainments have been given by me at Carlton Palace, by His Majesty's express command, before the Royal Family and select parties, it cannot, I conceive, be for a moment supposed that anything like immorality, or politics, or any impropriety, ever has been, or ever could

be, attempted by me. These facts, however, I should not urge for a moment, but should cheerfully obey your Lordship's order, were it not for the annoying difficulty, which I have before taken the liberty to mention, and which, I confess, I feel to be insurmountable.

Having stated that I have so frequently had the honour of giving my entertainment privately before His Majesty, I feel assured that your Grace will not consider it improper if I venture to say, that the difficulty to which I have alluded may possibly be overcome, if your Lordship would condescend to *hear*, rather than to *read me!* and allow me, on any evening you may be pleased to appoint, to go through my new entertainment in the presence of your Grace and family, and thus enable you to form a far more accurate judgment of its nature, than could possibly be derived from anything that could be written.

I trust your Lordship will not consider this appeal as in any way improper or intrusive.

I have the honour to be, my Lord Duke, your Grace's most respectful and obedient humble servant,

C. MATHEWS.

Whatever might have actuated the Duke to express the desire which drew forth Mr. Mathews's appeal, the latter had due weight, and produced the most gratifying result. His Grace not only gave up the point of reading the new matter, but also declined, in the most kind form, the offered recital of it; observing, that he had perfect reliance on Mr. Mathews's good taste and feeling, and should no more question it.

Ever after this the Duke and Duchess of

Montrose regularly visited Mr. Mathews's "At Homes;" and, on such occasions, his Grace generally did him the honour to go round to his dressing-room in the course of the evening.

One of the songs never *written down* to this day, either by author or singer, was "London at Five in the Morning," to the tune of the dance in "Speed the Plough," which tune Mr. Mathews sung to Charles in the carriage while they posted, who composed words to it as they drove along, which words his father learned from his lips before the end of their journey.

I never, after this occasion, recollect Mr. Mathews's being called upon, on account of his individual novelties, by a Lord Chamberlain.

Ever a zealous supporter of the Theatrical Fund, for the sake of the less fortunate in the profession, Mr. Mathews invariably overcame his repugnance to a public dinner, and personally contributed to the interests of each anniversary. However inconvenient, or even detrimental to his interest, his presence in London might be, I have known him not only often give up most pleasurable engagements, but on several occasions, pecuniary emolument, in order to add his name and exertions to the general stock. He dreaded the occasion as much as a man could do, who loved quiet and air better than a crowd and a heated room; and when an extra task was laid upon him, and he was required to make a speech, he suffered actual *illness*

during the whole day, from anticipation of the night's attempt.

On the present occasion he travelled an enormous journey to serve this institution, and appeared at the anniversary dinner as one of the stewards.

TO RICHARD LANE, ESQ.

MY DEAR SIR, Ivy Cottage, March 11th, 1826.

Many thanks for your kind recollection and fulfilment of your promise. The Hogarth is a gem, an unlooked-for treasure. I have retained one of each of the packets of duplicates and returned the remainder, as you requested; also two from *Ildgfkxl* and his friend *Mzudfg*.* They remain wrapped in the mystery they court, by the pains they take to conceal themselves. We have had numerous conjectures here to-day. Broderip says the nobleman is evidently Lord *Sghfgpxl*— Mrs. Mathews, the Duke of *Pxflu*, and I agree with *her*.

As to the performer who sent you tickets, we should have given up all hopes of discovering him, if it had not been for his defeating his own scheme by so plainly pointing out his own residence, 34, *S. R. James inmon*. "Oh," said I, "it is *R. W. Ynamn*."— "Evidently," said Broderip.

Seriously, I am evidently very much indebted to you

* These words are *drawings* from Mr. Lane's letter; meant as a good-humoured satire upon a careless mode of writing, which he often did playfully, to puzzle those whose letters he could not read. His own hand was remarkably clear.—A. M.

for your very kind present. Mrs. Mathews joins in compliments to Mrs. Lane. Very sincerely yours,

CHARLES MATHEWS.

In March, Mr. Mathews came before the public at the English Opera-house in his seventh "At Home." The following was the announcement:—

MR. MATHEWS'S INVITATIONS.

PART I.—Exordium on Invitations.—Mr. and Mrs. Fingerfit, R. S. V. P.—Mrs. W. Worrit, attached Friend. — Various Ways of delivering Invitations.

Song—*Two-penny Post.*

Monday.—Ghost of a Tune.— Invitation to Breakfast with Mr. Shakely.—*Master* Peter, Peter Master.—Nervous Toilette. —Sir Benjamin Blancmange.—Invalid Duet, without harmony. — Friendly Fugues. — Lady Dawdle's Invitation to a Pic-Nic Party to Norwood. —"*Cook's Oracle.*"— Recipe for concocting a Rout.

Song—*Gipsying Excursion and Quadrilles.*

Tuesday.—Invitation to Dinner at Sir Donald Scrupleton's. —Guests—Sir Harry Skelter, a *disappointed* bird of passage.— America, *Niagara:* Italy, *Vesuvius;* North Pole, *Noses.*— Mr. Popper (Nephew to the celebrated *Major Longbow*).—Sporting Anecdotes. — Staunch Pointer. — Invitation to the King's Theatre.

Song—*Visit to the Italian Opera.*

PART II.

Wednesday.—Mr. Archibald M'Rhomboid.—Robin Crankie. —The late Mr. M'Pherson. — Spanish Decapitation — Head and *Tale.*

Song—*London at five in the Morning.*

Thursday.—Invitation to dine with a Friend in a Family way.—Mr. Dilberry and the dear little Dilberrys. — Mr. John

Rally.—Nursery Ballads and Smoking Chimney.—Dinner.—Brilliant Sonata on the Pianoforte by Miss Jane Dilberry.

Song—(*from Der Freischutz*)—by Master Peter Dilberry.

Friday.—Invitation to a "*Rouge et Noir*" Table.—Harry Ardourly, a Yorkshire Fox Hunter.—Consequences of Gaming; the Gaol, the Mad-house.—Contrast.—Another *mad* Scene.—Invitation to the Hustings.

Song—*General Election.*

Saturday.—Invitation to join a Civic Aquatic Expedition on the Thames.—Finale.

PART III.—A Monopolylogue, to be called

THE CITY BARGE!

Æneas Stirturtle, Purveyor to the Barge, with a Cold in his head.
Sir Harry Skelter, endeavouring to see something.
Scully, an Antidiluvian Waterman.
Mr. Gibletts, a City Adonis.
Mrs. Georgina Gritts, a Bone of Contention.
Mr. Sassafras, an Apothecary—Rival to Gibletts.
Popper, the Sporting Calendar.

*** All the above characters by Mr. Mathews.

The songs will be accompanied on the pianoforte by Mr. J. T. Harris, who will play favourite Rondos between the parts.

According to the plan I have hitherto pursued, I here subjoin a contemporary criticism on this entertainment.

Our old favourite, Mathews's irresistible "Invitations" to his "At Home" attracted a large party of guests. Never were actor and audience in better spirits, or more pleased with each other. On no former occasion were the

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Aug^ts Hervieu del^t — A. Dicotes Lithos.

Mr Giblets. Mrs Georgiana Grits. Mr Sassafras. Mr Dilberry. VELUTI IN SPECULUM. Mr Popper. Sir Harry Skelter. Scully. Ænas Stirturtle.

Mr MATHEWS

Portraits of him in his Several Characters in the Entertainment called Initations. (Sketched from Life.)

versatile powers of our Proteus more thoroughly proved. We had him in all ages and conditions, doing great justice to each character, from *Methuselah* to *Mathews*, and from *Mathews* to the infant "mewling in his nurse's arms."

Our readers can have no idea of the *fun* of a pic-nic party till they hear it described by Mathews himself, who attended one by *invitation* from *Lady Dawdle*. Having lost all their dinner store by the oddest set of accidents, they were not so fortunate as another party, consisting of fourteen members, who each contributed a leg of mutton, without suspecting that others might hit upon the same fare. So that when there were fourteen legs of mutton on the board, a wag proposed that every gentleman should *eat his own leg*.

Sir Donald Scrupleton is an old Scotch baronet, of a very sceptical character, much inclined to *dooting*, and so indistinct in his utterance, that one intelligible word in six or seven is as much as any reasonable hearer has a right to expect.

The new piece abounds in the *vis comica* as much as any that have preceded it; but a single touch in it distinctly marks the hand of a master, and far exceeds anything that Mathews ever did before. His visit to the gaming-house contains as impressive a lesson of morality as ever was delivered from a pulpit. On that occasion, *Harry Ardourly*, a Yorkshire fox-hunter, for the first time that ever he entered the doors of a gaming-house, had the misfortune to win fifteen hundred pounds at a *Rouge et Noir* table. Success created a passion for the practice, which was indulged to the ruin of the unhappy young man's estate; and his mother and sisters were left penniless and unprotected, when he was consigned, first to

a gaol, and finally to a mad-house. In this last abode of misery he fancied himself winning back his lost fortune, and on the imaginary success of a cast, he raved aloud, "I have it!—'tis mine!—I have recovered my estates—my farms—my sisters' portions! Mother, mother, where are you? Receive (*fainting as into his mother's arms*),—mother, receive your prodigal!" After this picture, it was an effort for Mathews, and for him alone, to force the house to resume its gaiety. "I never after the longest march had so great a mind for my dinner as I had to cry with him for company. What could be the matter with me, an' please your honour,' quoth the corporal. 'Nothing in the world, *Trim*,' said my *Uncle Toby*, blowing his nose; 'but that thou art a good-natured fellow.'"

Mr. Mathews commenced by observing that this was the seventh season of his being "At Home" to the public at the English Opera-house; that he had served his apprenticeship, but did not wish to cancel his indentures; that he would rejoice if his seasons could, like *Thomson's*, be immortal; but as he could not hope for more than the transitory span of ordinary existence, unless indeed he could change his name from Mathews to Methuselah, he would make the best use of his time by availing himself of the patronage and favour of the audience. He had been ruminating one day on the style and title of the entertainment he was to present, when chance, which had afforded an answer to the inquiries of Sir Isaac Newton by the fall of an apple, solved his not less important doubts. Taking up a number of cards from his chimney-piece, he determined at once that a week's *invitations* should furnish matter for amusement. Here follows, by way of an exordium on invitations, a denunciation of formality and

nine o'clock dinners, with a sketch of the dinner for advancement given by the father, by way of getting the son a place, and of the parties for display got up by the mother, in hope that the daughter will "go off well," until she is as well known "as the statue at Charing Cross," with just as little chance of going off.

We are then introduced to an old friend of Mr. Mathews, one of those old friends who recollects you when you had blue eyes and flaxen hair, and first wore trowsers. This is a *Mrs. W. Worrit.* With her he dines, and is indulged with repeated proofs of the lady's accurate recollection of his infant days, and repeated declarations of her delight at seeing him. After some time, he observes an interchange of nods and winks amongst the company, and whispers of "You"—"No, you ask him;" until one of *Mrs. Worrit's* little daughters makes her way from the other end of the table with "her mamma's compliments to Mr. Mathews, and wishes he'd have the goodness to be funny."

The miseries of receiving numerous communications by the Two-penny Post are next described in a song. Amongst those which Mathews mentions as having reached himself, are one containing *novel* anecdotes from Joe Miller; another asking for an order for some one who had once met his grandfather's cousin; and a third from a casual acquaintance, committing his ten helpless brothers and sisters to his friendly care.

The imitations now commence. Mathews, having been lately at the Opera, rises on Monday morning haunted by the ghost of a tune—and who has not been haunted in the same manner? He prepares to shave with "Non più andrai" in his head—cuts his chin *furioso*—dries it *pianissimo*, and goes forth to breakfast with *Mr. Shakely*, an

old valetudinarian. He is welcomed by *Peter*, an impudent Yorkshire servant, who is "vice-roy" over his master; and, after making his way through various impediments, invented for the purpose of excluding the cold air, he reaches the breakfast-room of his host. There he overhears a dialogue in the adjoining dressing-room between *Peter* and his master, which consists, on the one side, of complaints and sufferings, and of blunt replies on the other. The one relates how he dreamt last night that the house fell down; the other, without the slightest expression of compassion, reproaches him for eating suppers. The master details how he thought that, in the fall, the chimney-pot tumbled on his head, and fixed itself, like a cap, over his eyes; the man reminds him of his transgression in eating toasted cheese. At length *Mr. Shakely* makes his appearance, and at the same time arrives *Sir Benjamin Blancmange*, a brother valetudinarian.

Their conversation consists of an interchange of complaints. If *Shakely* has a spasm in the chest, *Blancmange* has one that cuts all through him like a penknife; if one physician has decided *Shakely's* to be as bad a case as he ever saw, another has pronounced *Blancmange's* to be as bad as a case can be.

The rest of the day and night are passed in a gipsying party to Norwood, and a quadrille party afterwards. A recipe for concocting a rout is given, which has the merit of simplicity, if not of novelty. It is only to "put into a room, with a slow fire, a number of well-dressed people of both sexes; stir them up well together; then throw in wine, lobsters, ham, &c. Take care to make the room as full as possible, and the scum will run off of itself.

In the excursion to Norwood, the principal characters are a gentleman who wants fun, "nothing but fun;" a *Mr. Doleful*, who is extremely annoyed by sitting on the

knives and forks, and other parts of the baggage on his seat in the car; and a young lady, who expresses her satisfaction with the pleasures of the day with a most melancholy look and accent. The principal incident is a race down-hill, between a round of beef and one of the gentlemen, and their ultimate sousing in a pond.

At the quadrille party, the most remarkable character is a fashionable person with a cork leg, which is taken off with a corkscrew every morning.

On Tuesday, Mathews dines with *Sir Donald Scrupleton*, where he meets with *Sir Harry Skelter*, a great traveller, and *Mr. Popper*, a determined sportsman. *Sir Harry* has travelled in almost all parts of the world, except England, part of which he has indeed passed through, though only on his way to Calais or Grand Cairo; but in the course of his journeyings he has found nothing to admire. His invariable observation is, "I see nothing in it; people say *so much* of every thing, I 'm *disappointed*." Vesuvius is only a humbug — a high hill, with a fire at the top. At the North Pole, he had not his nose frozen off. Rome had "nothing in it;" and as to the Pope, "there was nothing in him;" he was only as old as Pope the actor, but not so fat.

Mr. Popper relates a story of his dog *Basto*, the truth of which he positively asserts. Being out shooting on the 1st of September, he missed his dog in a thicket, and returning to the same place in the following February, he found there the skeleton of a partridge and the skeleton of *Basto*, still in the attitude of pointing.

The evening is taken up in a visit to the King's Theatre, and imitations are given of Velluti, Porto, and De Begnis. Velluti and Porto are capital subjects.

The second part commences with Wednesday, when Mathews dines with *Mr. M'Rhomboid*, a Scotch lecturer.

Mr. M'Rhomboid is a mere matter-of-fact sort of person, without any taste for wit or humour. After a long delay, caused by the absence of *Mr. M'Pherson*, an inmate in *Mr. M'Rhomboid's* house, who is occupied "sharpening his teeth" in his bed-room, they sit down to dinner, and Mathews, by way of preventing total dulness, begins a story. He relates how a Spanish nobleman, being condemned to death——Here he is interrupted by *Mr. M'Rhomboid*, who inquires for what crime he was condemned. Mathews declares that is of no consequence to the story, but the lecturer refuses to hear any narrative in which so important a point is omitted; and a ground for condemnation having been invented in order to satisfy him, Mathews proceeds to relate how the family of the nobleman promised a reward of one hundred piastres to the executioner if he performed his task rapidly and skilfully. The hour of execution arrives — the criminal's neck is placed upon the block — he is unconscious of having received any wound, and reproached the executioner for his supposed delay. The executioner tells him that the imputation is unjust, and desires him to shake his head: he does so, and off it falls. "Well," says *Mr. M'Rhomboid*, with perfect gravity and sincerity, "did the man get the hundred piastres?"

The story of this execution has been told in another way, and quite as whimsically. It is said that, in a certain town on the Continent, where the place of executioner was lucrative, a public election usually took place to the honourable office, and the several candidates were required to exhibit their powers. On one occasion there were three competitors; the first struck off the head at a single stroke — the second struck it off also at a single stroke, and caught it on the point of his sword — the third made

his blow, but the head still remained in the same place. He retired four or five paces — advanced again, with a pinch of snuff in his fingers, and gave it to the criminal — he sneezed, and the head was immediately severed!

"London at five o'clock in the Morning" is next described, with much point and humour, in a song.* The visiter, who has left the hackney-coach waiting all night, and who has thus allowed the fare to grow from one shilling and sixpence to twenty-eight shillings and sixpence —the gentleman who, after *spinning* out the evening with some friends, is *reeling* home with *business on both sides the way*—and the imitations of the various cries as the morning advances, are remarkably felicitous. To those who are curious in entymological inquiries, it may be satisfactory to know that the cat-like cry of *mee-ow*, instead of milk, is not English, but French, and should be written *mi-eau* (half water); and to our musical readers it may be a piece of valuable information that the strange, half male, half female, voice which is often heard in our streets, and which has not hitherto received a scientific denomination, is, in fact, a *barrow-tone.*

On Thursday, Mathews is invited to dine with his friend, *Mr. Dilberry*, "in a family way." He is accompanied by *Mr. John Rally*, an imperturbable quizzer. On their arrival, they have first to encounter a black female servant, with a baby *Dilberry;* and then enters *Mrs. Dilberry* in haste, with her *armorial bearings* (bracelets) in her hand. *Mr. Dilberry* they find in the dining-room, in the act of drawing a cork; and Mathews exhibits his contortions and strainings with great drollery. The guests are soon alarmed by the appearance of eight little knives and forks upon the table. The young *Dilberries* soon

* The composition mentioned in the travelling carriage.—A. M.

follow; and, after delighting their visiters during dinner by their elegant irregularities, one of them, after dinner, sings a song, and another plays a lesson on the pianoforte fifty times over. *Mr. Dilberry*, too, attempts a song to an Irish air. The great difficulty is to observe the key; and in the course of his vocal displays, he jumbles all the keys together with a facility which it would puzzle a first-rate singer to equal.

On Friday, we are introduced to a *Rouge et Noir* table. The principal character here is *Harry Ardourly*, a young Yorkshire gentleman. He has just entered the room for the first time. In spite of his ignorance of the game, and the rashness produced by wine and high spirits, success attends his play, and he retires a winner of fifteen hundred pounds. Mathews meets him some time afterwards, ruined and dejected. His further visits to the gaming-house have reduced himself and his family to poverty and wretchedness, and the next change of scene is to a mad-house. All this was told, or rather, represented, with much pathos and effect.

Saturday's diversion consists of a description of a General Election, in a song. There are some capital hits in it.

The third part is, as usual, a "Monopolylogue." It is called the "City Barge," moored near Richmond Bridge. The first character that appears is *Æneas Stirturtle*, the purveyor to the barge, who has a cold in his head, and sneezes a hundred and twenty-nine times. The next is *Sir Harry Skelter*, who sees "nothing in it," but owns that there's "a good house," when he looks towards the audience. The third is *Scully*, an old waterman, very well executed. The fourth is *Mr. Gibletts*, who is in love with *Mrs. Georgina Gritts*. *Mrs. Georgina* follows, and she and *Gibletts* retire into a neighbouring recess. *Sassafras*,

an apothecary, a rival of *Gibletts*, then enters in a violent fit of jealousy. In order to be revenged, he makes a bet with *Popper*, who is inside the barge, that he cannot hit a piece of paper on the door of the recess. *Popper* accepts the challenge, and fires; *Sassafras*, nearly at the same time, is caught in a man-trap, in a neighbouring plantation. Mr. Mathews enters to put an end to the confusion, and so ends the entertainment.

In praise of Mr. Mathews, it should be remarked, that he lashes with becoming severity the most prevailing and favourite sins and foibles of the day. In high life as well as low, from Lady Fidget's rout to the milling match at Moseley Hurst, his aim has been to "shoot folly as it flies," and vice also.

TO C. MATHEWS, ESQ.

(With a bottle of nectar.)

Very much obliged to you, my dear Sir, for your notice of "The Oracle,"* which the author heard last night.

Pray do me the favour to present "The Housekeeper's Leger" to Mrs. Mathews; and I venture also to request that you will read the preface, in which I have tried to make my readers laugh, while they are learning their lesson of economy; for I hold, that to make a man laugh heartily, is to do him one of the greatest kindnesses, and that he deserves to be the happiest man who contributes most to the comfort of his fellow-creatures. Now, who has made more people laugh heartily than yourself? Long may you continue so to do! Your's very sincerely,

WM. KITCHENER.

43, Warren Street, 12th March 1826.

* "The Cook's Oracle."

CHAPTER XXIV.

Mrs. Richard Wilson's parties.—Distinguished Guests.—Letter to Mrs. Mathews.— Offer to Mr. Mathews from Mr. Price of an engagement at Drury Lane Theatre. — Mr. Mathews at the English Opera-house, and in the Provinces. — Invitation from the Duke of Clarence to Mr. Mathews. — Conversation between him and his Royal Highness. — Letters to Mrs. Mathews: a Foreigner's Adventures: Journey to Halifax.— Investigation as to the spelling of Shakspeare's Name. —Mr. Mathews's "At Home" at the English Opera-house for the Eighth Season.—The "Home Circuit"—Programme. —Account of the Performance.—"Amateurs and Actors."— A Journal from Brighton. — Singular Visiter. — Letters to Mrs. Mathews: Death of her Mother.

At the close of this season Mr. Mathews indulged himself in a few days' holiday in Suffolk, at the house of some very old and warm friends, now, alas! removed, with many such, who would, had they existed, have proved a solace to me in my bereavement. I preserve this brief allusion to a friendship of more than thirty years, as a memorial of the once happy hours passed in my girlish days in the midst of the gaiety so widely spread by Mrs. Richard Wilson's parties, in Lincoln's Inn Fields, where the noblest of the land,

the wittiest and wisest, gayest and gravest, the idle and the busy, assembled with one common feeling of enjoyment. There have I seen the fine face of the lamented Sir Samuel Romilly, with his lovely and amiable lady at his side, smiling, as if peace was for ever a safe inmate in his bosom! Alas! for this remembrance! Lords Erskine and Eldon, and a long list of nobles, headed by Royalty itself, were frequent, and I may say, familiar guests, at Mr. Wilson's table, where *all the talents* were associated. Dear old Captain Morris, with his songs and singing, and charming society; Sheridan, and other of his noted contemporaries, the youthful Theodore Hook and Horace Twiss, (just rising from their teens,) stood prominently forward, full of the buoyancy, wit, and talent which have established their respective positions in the high and intellectual society in which they both live. Out of the many that my "mind's eye" now brings before me, these are among the very few that remain to give assent to the truth of those pleasant hours passed in that most pleasant house!

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Biddleston, 12th July 1826.

General Grosvenor has given me a frank, or I believe I should not have written, as I have not enough to say worth paying for. I need not say how delighted I was at the receipt of dear Charles's letter. It was a god-send upon

my arrival here, as, indeed, I was most anxious to hear of him. His letter has cheered me: it is all that is delightful. Charming weather! Young is here—desires love—wishes to know if you got the books he sent. All the family desire love. Percy* is better than ever I saw him since his illness. Mrs. Randolph desires particular remembrance; wishes you were here. Pressed upon all sides to send for you: as I know you won't come, I have made all sorts of excuses; but feel embarrassed, as I cannot give such a one as I should myself allow to be really good under the same circumstances. However, we are all slaves to something, and a dislike to variety is an unhappy specimen. Locomotion is what is called *happiness* to me; that is, life and spirits. God bless you!

C. MATHEWS.

The succeeding letter was the beginning of a negotiation with Mr. Mathews to act for a term in the regular drama, at Drury Lane. An allusion is made in it to a second visit to America, which, however, was ultimately set aside, such a step being inconsistent with Mr. Mathews's home views at that period.

MY DEAR MATHEWS, London, 15th July 1826.

I have released Bish from his contract, upon his paying me 2,000*l.*, and have taken the theatre at my old terms, 10,600*l.* per year. I can only beg of you to reserve for me a few nights in the next season, in any contract you may

* Mr. Wilson's only son, named after his godfather, the present Duke of Northumberland, prematurely taken from this world to a better.—A. M.

The MATHEW ORAMA for 1827. or Cockney Gleanings aint that a good un now?

Aug.st Harrison

A Ducrow Lithog.r

Mr Mathews (Waking)
What does this all mean? have I been dreaming?

Jack Project
Get plenty of strangers ha! ha! that will make your Fortune for you eh!

Paganini Jock
He was very funny indeed. Pretty how pretty has fortune made me by those that for wanting tickets

Dicky Gossip
Then for that rag or for calling over calling or bell drawing Dicky Sorry Dicky Sorry is the matter

Mr Jerdan
Leave me to Heaven Mercy Mercy Lord forgive Lord forgive me &c &c

Rubini Sphinx
Why so Capt.n Cook living at the Savages like a sucking cloning Critter

Laugh you goose I will tell you some day astonishing Mrs Fitzroy

Professor Mac Adder and Gentlemen &c &c yesterday suppose that is to show you how we should have done should nothing prevent us in a way that nobody else understands

Square Pinnacle
I used to live handy parish by the Gallery and there we are all

Sir Peter Teazle
When an old Batchelor marries a young Wife what has he to expect?

Lawyer Muzzle
What are you young to do sir? Have you got a Counsellor to advise you? Have you a Solicitor to draw your Deeds and Instruments? Have you a Conveyancer to draw your Leases? Have you a Special Pleader to draw your Pleas? Have you a Barrister to draw your Briefs? Have you a Serjeant to draw your Writs? Have you a Judge to draw your Warrants? Have you a Chancellor to draw your Patents? Have you a Bishop to draw your Licences? Have you a Dean to draw your Wills? Have you a Prebendary to draw your Leases? Have you a Vicar to draw your Tithes? Have you a Curate to draw your Sermons? Have you a Clerk to draw your Pay? Have you a Sexton to draw your Grave? Have you a Gravedigger to draw your Coffin? Have you a Undertaker to draw your Pall? Have you a Mourner to draw your Tears? Have you a Widow to draw your Sighs? Have you a Orphan to draw your Pity? Have you a Beggar to draw your Charity? Have you a Thief to draw your Purse? Have you a Rogue to draw your Cheque? Have you a Fool to draw your Money? Have you a Knave to draw your Bill? Have you a Lawyer to draw your Bill? Have you a Lawyer to draw your Bill? Have you a Lawyer to draw your Bill?

Sir Pertinax Mac Sycophant
Now where do you live sir? Where do you live sir? Where do you live sir?

make with Arnold. For God's sake, bear me in mind. I feel that it is unnecessary to make anything like terms. *You* shall say what they shall be. You and Liston are my great hopes. A letter from you would influence him: however, do not write it if it be disagreeable to you. I leave London on Friday, twelve o'clock, and Liverpool ten o'clock on Monday. Our American business shall be well digested during my absence. Write me a line in return. Excuse great haste. God bless you! S. PRICE.

In the autumn of this year Mr. Mathews accepted a dramatic engagement for a few weeks at the English Opera-house, in the course of which one of the most genuine farces ever produced upon the English stage,* was brought forward, in which Mr. Peake, the author, displayed Mr. Mathews's powers to peculiar advantage in the character of *Trefoil.*

After his engagement, at the English Opera-house, Mr. Mathews made a short tour.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Liverpool, Oct. 31st, 1826.

Here I am at the Waterloo; and right glad to be in a comfortable house, for the weather is wretched—heart-breaking.

I spent a very jolly day with Speidell at St. John's College, and proceeded, on Thursday, to Stratford. Dined with Saunders — and sat up all night reading by the kitchen-fire (no other in the house) at the Lion, to be

* "Before Breakfast."

ready for a coach that always came at half-past three until Friday morning, when it arrived at five; by which I got to Birmingham only ten minutes before my Manchester coach started, into which I trundled with three *damp strangers.** C. MATHEWS.

Hampton Court Palace, Nov. 26, 1826.

The Earl of Erroll is commanded by His Royal Highness the Duke of Clarence to request the favour of Mr. Mathews's company, on Friday evening next, at Bushy House.

Lord Erroll requests the pleasure of Mr. Mathews's company at dinner, on that day, at six o'clock. Lord Erroll will have a bed ready for Mr. Mathews.

After several previous arrangements (and disarrangements) for Mr. Mathews to entertain the Duke of Clarence, the time had really come. He accepted Lord Erroll's invitation, and on the day in question went to Bushy. In the evening he accompanied his noble host to the duke's palace, and performed to a select party there, returning to Lord Erroll's for the night.

On the following morning Mr. Mathews was requested to attend upon the Duke; and, on his arrival, was shown into the room where his Royal Highness and the Duchess had just breakfasted. The latter, with great condescension, said a few

* Amongst the eccentric sayings of Mr. Brummel ("Beau Brummel") is recorded, that he ascribed a severe cold, then affecting him, to the causalty of being shown into a room with a *damp stranger*.—A. M.

words in compliment to the entertainment she had received on the previous night, and then left the room. The next moment Mr. Mathews's eye was fixed upon a large-sized portrait of Mrs. Jordan, hanging up, I think, over the chimney-piece. The Duke, observing this, said, "I know you have a collection of theatrical portraits, Mr. Mathews, which I shall ask to see some day. I hope you have not one like *that?*" My husband did not quite understand the question, and his look probably expressed his perplexity, for the Duke added, "I mean so good a likeness. I should be vexed that anybody possessed such a one but myself—a *better* it is not possible to find, and I should not like anybody else to have as *good* a one."

Mr. Mathews replied that it was indeed excellent, and that he was not so fortunate as to possess so true a resemblance. The Duke then gazed upon the picture, saying, with emotion and strong emphasis, "She was one of the best of women, Mr. Mathews." My husband felt that the Duke was sincere in his belief: indeed there was something so affecting in his manner of paying this simple and spontaneous tribute to the memory of the mother of his children, that it brought tears into the eyes of him to whom it was addressed. The Duke perceiving this, put forth his hand, and pressing that of my husband, added, "You knew her, Mathews; therefore must have known her excellence."

After a short and pensive pause, the Duke diverted the conversation, from the interesting subject into which he had been betrayed, to the scene of the previous night; and, after commenting upon what most pleased him, in his characteristically blunt manner said something in reference to his *obligations*, and not very extensive means to be liberal. This was touching my husband on the tenderest point; and while he hesitated in what becoming manner he could tell one of the Royal family that he did not like *payment* of any kind out of the regular routine of his profession, even for "*obliging*" him, the Duke put a little case into his hand (not without some embarrassment in his own manner at the awkward position in which it was evident my husband felt himself), and said, "Mathews, I am not rich enough to remunerate such talent as yours, or make a suitable return for your kind exertions of last night, which delighted us all; but I hope you will gratify me by your acceptance of the contents of this little purse, for the purpose of purchasing some small addition to your collection of paintings—in remembrance of *me* and of the *original* of that portrait."*

This was so gracefully though simply expressed, that my husband made his bow in acknowledgment, and departed, deeply touched at the feeling evidence of the Duke's recollections of *what had been!*

* The case contained a 50*l.* note.

In relating this fact I feel unconscious that I am committing an impropriety; for, in my estimation, the King of England lost nothing of the respect felt for him, by the admitted fact that the Prince had loved the mother of his children.

TO H. B. GYLES, ESQ.

London, Nov. 29th, 1826.

How is the dog, and how are you, you puppy?

You funny fellow! will you never settle? What! wandering again? Lord Mayor's gentleman, ha! ha!—house, land, all given up, "all at one fell swoop." I should have written sooner, could I have gained any information on the subject. Either you are hoaxing me, or have been hoaxed—I know not which. I cannot hear of such a situation. I don't know any real City men; but all of whom I have inquired doubt its existence, and much more the salary.

Yesterday I dined at Mr. Wilson's; and, knowing I should meet one or two M.P.'s there, and knowing that as I had nothing to say, *and very little of that*, my letter would not be worth paying for, I waited for that day to obtain a frank. The only information I gained in addition was of a nature to make you leave Martley, or any other snug thing, and jump at such an office. *Cruelty Martin* said there is such a person about the Mansion-house, and that he always waited at table!!!

Thine, truly,

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

York, December 20th, 1826.

I was, last night, gloriously repaid for all my toils, and they were not trifling. On Monday night, I had one hour and a half at the table, and acted in "Before Breakfast" and "Jonathan;" travelled here yesterday, and acted "Youthful Days" and "Before Breakfast." Rather tough work. To-night I rest my old bones. I dine at Belcombe's. They go to the ball, and I read all alone.

I do think I meet with droller adventures than anybody else. At dinner, yesterday, a foreigner told, as droll, a story, at which he almost choked with laughter, of the difficulties he had encountered to get to dinner at five o'clock. That he had left Hull that morning at six — the steamer was *agoing* to blow up I believe; however, he could not go on—"and we were all put ashore at Goole, and we were obliged to walk three miles up to our knees in mud, till we came to de ferry; and dere vas only von chaise, vich I took. Some of de players vas dere, and dey could not get on."—"Was there a person there of the name of Willson?"* said I.—"Oh, yes; a fittler, I believe. He is left too. Dey cannot get here to-night. Ha! ha! ha!" You may suppose my feelings. I sent away my plate, and was dandled up and down, with a sick stomach, in a sedan to the theatre, as soon as I could get one, expecting to have the mortification of dismissing the house. I have not time to tell the rest of the particulars; but as to my chaises, they arrived in time, a few minutes before seven, and the relief made me act in tip-top spirits.

Having nothing further to say, *I* can only say, "If you loves me as I loves you," why you are as affectionate as

C. Mathews.

* Mr. Mathews's professional servant.—A. M.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Halifax, January 9th, 1827.

"From Hull, Hell, and Halifax"—the saying is somewhat musty, but it must have been of very ancient date if the former was not superior to the latter at the time. O dear! if I could not have cheated myself like Johnny Winter with, "Well, there's one comfort—in two days more I shall be within three days of going home," I should certainly have sunk under the accumulation of horrors, as I may call them, of yesterday.

In the first place, I left a comfortable house, with the best bed and bedroom I have seen in Yorkshire; and such a doting host I have not to my back! He can remind me of everything I ever said to him in my life; and the only decorations of my bedroom were varieties of framed portraits of myself. Well, such a day!—"all hail!" such blowing, such expectations of being blown over! I was obliged to post eighteen miles from Leeds. You travelled the road in 1804, when you cried for fear lest dear little Charley would be killed by the jolting. I was stuffing my pocket-handkerchief into the apertures of the broken glass of the chaise-windows half the way. I had the beautiful anticipation of some one in brief authority preventing the performance on account of the death of the Duke. Got here in three hours and a half! There's posting!

I found Paddy Manly in doubt as to our acting; "the nobs," as he called them, inquiring if I could not postpone my performance. I said, "*No;* if I cannot perform to-night, I will be off to London by the first coach." Indeed I would have popped off directly the morning paper arrived if I had not been under promise; for the miserable weather was enough to torture me without

threats of shutting up theatres; and so we acted. There was 56*l.* and if many had not given up their places out of squeamishness, (several, unfortunately, were military, and they could not be expected to go,) we should have had 80*l.* it is supposed.

Such a town!—such an inn!—such a *mucky* yard!—with ostlers, chaises, ducks, pigeons, starved cats, drowned kittens! Oh! *à propos, vide* "*stout gentleman*"—*exactly!* only hail, and sometimes snow, for his rain.

By the time you receive this, it will be all over; therefore laugh, and reflect that then I shall nearly be in clover again, at Smith's; for there is *real* comfort.*

C. MATHEWS.

Mr. Wivell,† having seen a paragraph in a newspaper, intimating that Mr. Mathews had made some discoveries on the subject of the ancient method of spelling Shakspeare's name, addressed a letter to him, requesting that he would oblige him with any information he had collected. In reply to this communication, Mr. Mathews addressed to him the following letter:—

TO C. MATHEWS, ESQ.

DEAR SIR, Ivy Cottage, March 13th, 1827.

Pray accept my apology for my apparent neglect. You must be aware how much my time has been necessarily occupied in the preparation for my new entertainment,

* Mr. J. P. Smith, a merchant of Leeds, and a very kind and valued friend of my husband at all times.—A. M.

† Author of "An Enquiry into the History, Authenticity, and Characteristics of the Shakspeare Portraits," &c.

and I trust that will plead my excuse for not having sooner furnished you with the information you requested.

The paragraph which appeared in the newspapers respecting my recent discovery of the correct spelling of Shakspeare's name was not quite correctly stated; and as you have done me the honour to apply to me (conceiving, as I do, that the most trifling point relating to our beloved bard is interesting), I have much pleasure in furnishing you with an exact statement of the information I have gained on the subject. It was through the kindness of Captain Saunders, an enthusiastic Shaksperian, then Chamberlain, and since Mayor, of Stratford-upon-Avon, that I had the means of ascertaining, beyond all doubt, the mode of pronouncing the name of the bard during his lifetime. The signatures subjoined are correctly copied from the council-book of the corporation of Stratford during the period that John Shakspeare, the poet's father, was a member of the municipal body. The entries in the book consist, first, of corporate accounts; and it is remarkable that the volume opens with those of John Shakspeare himself, whilst filling the office of Chamberlain in 1573, and, on good grounds, presumed to be written with his own hand. Secondly, of the names of the members of the common-council, attending or absent from the halls, with the results of their deliberations. The name of the bard's father occurs 166 times, under fourteen different modes of orthography; viz.

1. Shackesper. . .	4	8. Shakspeyr . . .	17
2. Shackespere . .	3	9. Shakysper . .	4
3. Shacksper . . .	4	10. Shakyspere . .	9
4. Shackspere . .	2	11. Shaxpeare . .	69
5. Shakespere . .	13	12. Shaxper . . .	8
6. Shaksper . .	1	13. Shakxpere . .	18
7. Shakspere . . .	5	14. Shaxspeare . .	9

This then, surely, is conclusive as to the pronunciation of his name; for though we are aware that, in those days, orthography was very loose, yet the recurrence of Shaxpeare 104 times, in my mind, proves the mode of pronouncing his name to be arbitrary. Most persons ignorant of rules write as they pronounce.

Of these several spellings, Shakspere, as in No. 7, is pronounced by him alone to be, without doubt, the poet's orthography, from a perusal of his signature to a deed of sale made in 1613; but Shakspeare has been the favourite mode, with little variation, with the commentators and biographers. The poet's will exhibits this spelling in his last signature thereto. The spelling adopted by Heminge and Condell, in the first folio edition of his plays, viz. Shakespeare, seems almost without authority therefore; for the lengthening force of the intermediate *e* occurs but 13 times out of the 166 instances; whereas the great body of testimony is in favour of the short power of the vowel *a* in the first syllable.

There is much reason to believe that the 8th variety was the spelling and pronunciation of John Shakspeare himself, and that the instances are entered in his own autograph and the 11th variety. Shaxpeare, which is the predominant one, is thus written in the common-hall entries by Mr. Henry Rogers, who was a barrister and common-clerk of the corporation.

Happy in the opportunity that this communication affords me of expressing my admiration of your praiseworthy exertions, I am, dear Sir, yours faithfully,

C. Mathews.

When, subsequently, visiting Stratford with my husband, we were attracted to a group of

boys playing in the street, by hearing one of them address his playfellow as *Shaxpere*, from which it appears that this pronunciation of the name is the popular one of the county.

On the 8th of March, the English Opera-house, for the eighth season, presented Mr. Mathews "At Home." This was the announcement:—

HOME CIRCUIT; OR, LONDON GLEANINGS.

PART I.—Exordium—Pecuniary Crisis: Civic Explanation of—Jack Project.—Schemes.—Delights of Country Acquaintance.—Visit to Fulham.—Project's Plan to make Mr. Mathews's Fortune by a mere

Song—Medley of Melodists.

Gleanings—Mr. Domus: "*Look at Home.*"—Commodore Cosmogany: "*Look Abroad.*"—Mr. Zachary Barnacle: "*Look Everywhere.*"—Monument on Fish Street Hill, Pompey's Pillar.—St. Paul's, St. Peter's.—River Thames, River Nile.—Tower of London, Tower of Pekin.—Coffee House Directory.—Hermitage Hall, Fulham.

Song—Short Stages.

More Gleanings—Ex-Justice, Lawyer Muzzle.—Penal Code.—"Do you know what you are doing?"—Statutes at large.—Mr. Spinks, Rebus Writer, Ladies' Diary.—Black Eyes and Black Act.—Feline Oculist.—Benefit of betting.—Legal Liabilities.—Mr. Honeyman and his Honeymoon.—Marriage.—Barnacle's Bewailings: "Losing all our Amusements."—Visit to Theatrical Gallery proposed, previous to which, a Peep at the Auction Mart, and

Royal Exchange,—*in a Song.*

PART II.

A MONOPOLYLOGUE, to introduce the DEAD *alive,* entitled MATHEWS'S DREAM; OR, THE THEATRICAL GALLERY!

In which will be exhibited whole-length Portraits of the late

Messrs. Suett,	in *Dicky Gossip*,
Kemble,	in *Penruddock*,
King,	in *Sir Peter Teazle*,
Cooke,	in *Sir Pertinax Macsycophant*,
Incledon,	in *The Storm*,

Cum multis aliis post obit Recollections, depicted from the Life, by Mr. Mathews.—The Scene painted by Mr. Roberts.

PART III.—GLEANINGS CONTINUED.

Leather Lane Parthenon, or Mechanical Athenæum.—Mr. Sandy M'Sillergrip, with his Lecture.—Arts and Sciences made easy.—Barnacle *redivivus*.—More Lamentations.—Gog and Magog.—Hurdy-gurdies.—Decay of Dancing Bears.—Loss of the Lotteries.—Things that were—

Song—Things that were not.

Fresh Gleanings—Thames Expedition.—Commodore Cosmogany's Colloquies.—Red House, Battersea; Golden House, Bhurtpore.—Batter-sea, Black Sea, Dead Sea, and Red Sea.—Pigeon-shooting: Tiger-shooting.—Vauxhall Hums: Westphalia Hams.—Visit to the Exhibition proposed.—Sketch in *water* Colours.—Joe Hatch, the Thames Chancellor, Boat Barrister, and Regal Legal Waterman.—Somerset House—

Song—Royal Academy.

Additional Gleanings—Mr. Aspinall and his Man Andrew.—Personification of Fear.—Castellated Mansion.—Alarms and Alarum Bells.—Prevention is better than Cure.—Gypsies.—Robberies forestalled.—Mr. Muzzle: more Statutes.—Mr. Spinks: Reiteration of Rebuses.—Compounding Felony—Real Cockney Gleanings.—

Song—Epping Hunt.

Messrs. Cosmogany, Muzzle, Spinks, and Mathews.—Finale.

The Songs will be accompanied on the pianoforte by Mr. James T. Harris, who will play favourite Rondos between the Parts.

Mr. Mathews, after reaping a rich harvest in foreign countries, places his scenes and adventures of character at home, within the sound of Bow bell, where he finds that to the acute observer, much remains to be explored. His chief associates are *Commodore Cosmogany*, a "traveller," with as exhaustless a fund of invention as *Major Longbow* himself, and so attached to the rare sights to be met with abroad, that he owns no acquaintance with the Monument, St. Paul's, or the Thames; *Lawyer Muzzle*, a walking digest of the statutes at large, who, for the simplest action, can quote a law which makes it penal; *Mr. Zachary Barnacle*, a pessimist; and *Spinks*, a village tradesman, addicted to the muses, who retails bad jokes and stale conundrums, to which Mathews contrives, however, by his inimitable manner, to give more effect than the most original wit and humour would have produced in other hands. A butt like this always forms a part of Mathews's *dramatis personæ*. Various other characters are introduced in the course of the adventures, which include a journey to town in one of the "short stages," the various interruptions in which, with the agony of an inside passenger, who has an engagement (military time) to dinner, are described with great humour. A visit to the Royal Exchange, given with great spirit; a scene at the auction mart; a visit to the Royal Academy; and the mysteries, in full description, of the Epping Hunt. One of the best occasional delineations of character, is that of *Joe Hatch*, a waterman, who is also termed the Thames Chancellor and Boat Barrister, a fellow (we presume a real portrait, though we have not the good fortune to know the original) who lays down the law of his craft, promotes and allays quarrels, and gratifies his fare with a "long tough yarn" of his own adventures. A *Mr. Aspinall*, who

is in constant dread of thieves, and who sends out his servants to any suspicious fellow he sees with a supply of money or clothing, to prevent his being robbed and murdered, is humorously drawn. Several songs are interspersed in Mr. Mathews's best style of humour. The Entertainment winds up with a monopolylogue, called "Mathews's Dream," or "The Theatrical Gallery;" in the course of which he introduces imitations of Suett, Kemble, King, Cooke, Incledon, and other eminent performers, now no more.

Mathews's Theatrical Gallery has been a "palpable hit." He has never done anything more ably; it is food for every mouth, and is at once the most agreeable and most finished mode of conveying a personal imitation. Mr. Mathews has herein a double gratification; for, in eliciting the unbounded applause which his performance does, he is only receiving, in a multiplied degree, the admiration of those numerous visiters to the "Real Simon Pure" at Kentish Town, his own residence, in which his genius, industry, and property have erected a monument to their owner's character, that will render it illustrious for ever and ever. We cannot imagine a more gratifying circumstance to any man, than the homage which is nightly paid to Mr. Mathews in this Monopolylogue; and it must be an earnest to him, that, highly as his abilities are rated by every one who saw him, it is an admiration inferior, if possible, to that which is bestowed on the consequence and respectability which his taste has thrown around his profession.

TO H. B. GYLES, ESQ.

DEAR GILLY, London, Friday, 9th March, 1827.

Let me know what your movements are to be, you funny, fidgetty, loco-poco-locomotive, harlequin chap!

Once you said you were coming to London, or its neighbourhood. Have you such a notion? Why did not you reply to my motion about being our neighbour? I want to farm with you.

I opened last night, and with decided success. Everything went capitally. I should like you to see my last piece; a sort of copy of my Gallery. The whole stage is occupied with pictures; and, considering it is only scene-painting after all, most skilfully done indeed, by Roberts. I relate anecdotes of many of the principal actors, as I am reminded of them in the scene, and animate five whole lengths—Kemble, Cooke, King, Incledon, and Suett. Our compliments to you and yours.

C. MATHEWS.

TO MR. MATHEWS.

MY DEAR MATHEWS, June 9th, 1837.

His Royal Highness the Duke of Sussex desires me to request of you, as a particular favour to him, that you will have the goodness to get up some little entertainment on Friday next, for the Queen of Wirtemberg, at Kensington Palace, about three o'clock in the day, as her Majesty is not well enough to go to the theatre. Let me have your answer as soon as possible. Very faithfully yours,

HENRY FREDERIC STEVENSON.

Mr. Mathews, unfortunately, did not find it possible to attend this summons, and thus missed the last opportunity afforded him of showing his sense of a long series of unvarying kindness and favour bestowed upon him by His Royal Highness, a subject of regret to him ever after.

TO RICHARD B. PEAKE, ESQ.

DEAR P.

Pray get the inclosed franked for me: you will herein much oblige, truly serve, and in a most valuable manner forward the interests of your loving humble servant,

C. MATHEWS.

P.S. We all agreed last night that "Amateurs and Actors" is one of the very pleasantest farces on the stage, and that Wrench is one of the most humorous actors. I don't know whether he likes himself in the part of *Wing*, but to us he was the perfection of the pleasant ludicrous. His perfect unconsciousness of an audience seeing him make a fool of himself, is no small part of his excellence. We laughed after we got to Broderip's as much as while we were at the theatre. Keeley, too, I thought admirable, and Bartley kept up the ball nobly. That straight waistcoat is one of the very best jokes I ever heard in that way. We were astonished by Penson's Italian song: it is perfect. I did not mean to write a criticism when I began; but we were truly amused, and I think when a man at my age, who has seen so much, is sent laughing to his bed, he ought to return his thanks to the primary cause; therefore, I thank you, Mr. Peake, very much for having written so excellent a farce. Yours, once more,

C. M.

Foregad! the postscript is longer than the letter!

During my husband's absence from town, Mr. Price reiterated his earnest desire to engage him at Drury Lane this season, in a letter addressed to Mr. Mathews's confidential friend and adviser upon all important business, and requesting his influence in favour of such an arrangement. This

application led the way to a serious negotiation between the parties, the result of which will hereafter appear.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Brighton, 26th July 1827.

I send a journal. Wednesday morning, rose at half-past eight; started at half-past nine; wind west, with breezes, cloudy, and threatening. Arrived at Croydon at eleven; at half-past, slight rain. Red Hill; baited my horse, but fasted myself. Read Napoleon: counted six Brighton coaches in the hour I remained there. Arrived at Crawley, half-past three; received by David, a hurdy-gurdy organ, and Pan-pipes, French itinerants, who played under my window all dinner-time, annoying me very much, for which I gave them sixpence. Bad dinner; three mutton chops totally spoiled—fried and over-done—dirty young potatoes. Started at half-past five. T-ee-d at Hickstead, and arrived at half-past nine at Brighton. Here I am, at the "old Villain's." Went into a warm bath; and, after listening to the prattle of Russell for two hours, went to bed; rose at eleven; rehearsed my song.

I was quite delighted with "The Rendezvous," which is a real good piece, quite French, and very well put together for our stage, and, moreover, very well acted. I had a capital front seat on a chair, in the front boxes, which I enjoyed all in my way till the end of "The Rendezvous," when Mrs. Elliot spied me, and beckoned me to her side box; where I saw the last piece *not* in my way, for she talked to me all the time.

C. MATHEWS.

Mr. Mathews used to remark, that odd characters seemed placed purposely *in his way*, that he

might pick them up. It is certain that he saw more oddities than most people. Whether this arose from a fine mental perception of peculiarities, or an aptness to describe what other eyes either altogether overlooked, or thought not of describing; or whether he was, as he said, favoured in such opportunities, it is certain that he constantly found something to add to his rich stores of character.

Being engaged to a late dinner, Mr. Mathews, in compliance with the demand of his appetite, which had been lately accustomed to an earlier hour, had ordered a mutton chop to be brought up to him one day, at the Old Ship. As he was waiting for it, "a gentleman" was announced by the waiter, who, as usual with such people, seemed delighted at showing up a nuisance,—and immediately made his appearance in the room. He was a perfect stranger; and, had the *sun not shone* brilliantly all that day, or had my husband been advertised to make his bow in public that night, woe would it have been to the doughty stranger who now addressed him with impunity. He was a little, fat, red-faced man, of respectable appearance, with his head frosted over with pomatum, and powder like a twelfth-cake. "*Mr. Mathus*, I presume?" asked the little gentleman, with his hat in his hand, at the same time making a low bow.—"Yes, Sir," mildly answered my husband; "what is your pleasure with me?"—"Why, sir,"

chuckled the good-humoured intruder, as he stood gazing somewhat in the fashion of a sight-seer, who has paid for such privilege; "why, Sir—a—a—I have taken, perhaps, a great liberty, which I beg you 'll excuse. The fact is—a—a—I never go to a playhouse; but—a—*raily*—a—a—I have heard much of *you;* and I have even *read* much about you, Sir. It is said, that you are an uncommon character. I am going away this afternoon; and, hearing that you were in Brighton, *raily* I could not resist the *opportoonity* of finding you out before my *departur*, being anxious—a—a—a—to see how you presented yourself to the *eye!*"

As I have said, Mr. Mathews was in a favourable state of spirits, and, moreover, was amused at the novelty of the style of this *raily* simple and inoffensive person. He, therefore, determined to humour his visiter, and accordingly said, in answer to his droll address:—

"Well, sir, I hope my appearance is satisfactory."

"Truly so," replied the little plump man, as he measured him with his eye; "I look upon it, sir, that you have had more whimsical *adventurs* and odd things happen to you than ever occurred to any other man."

"Why, *yes*, sir," said Mr. Mathews, "odd things *do* sometimes occur, as you say, sir."

At this moment the waiter entered with the tray; upon which Mr. Mathews invited the stran-

ger to sit down, adding, "As you have come to see a strange animal, it is lucky you have found him at feeding-time—will you partake?"

"By no means," bowed the little portly gentleman. "Sir, I will no longer intrude; for *raily*, Mr. *Mathus*, I *have* taken a freedom; but I could *not* resist the *opportoonity* that offered, and all I *have* to say is, that I have been *very much* gratified by your *benign* and generous reception. Sir, your very obedient."

Thus saying, the little corpulent stranger bowed and backed himself out of the room, with much gravity and apparent satisfaction.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Brighton, July 29th, 1827.

The only person I have yet seen to speak to is Horace Smith, who has called on me, and I on him.

Such a day! the sea in "beauty green;" the sun full glare on me, and me on it—quite a revel.

I am sorry to say the complaint in my back is not improved by three douch-baths.

The first night I was absolutely in violent pain during the whole of the third act, and could hardly crawl off the stage. Last night I got through very well again, until the end of the second act as before, when it gave way, as it were, and *repetitur idem*—it was misery. It was most fortunate that I brought the pony: I cannot account for it, but it is the only situation in which I do not feel some pain—I ride with ease. I have still faith that the baths will restore me,

when I am released from the fatigue of standing three hours (with a broken back) on one spot.

Elder called on me yesterday morning, and left at one o'clock, in the steamer, for Dieppe. He goes straight to Geneva, and expects to meet Charles in Italy.

I have given you "a line" as you desired; and so, with love to your mother, I remain, &c. C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Brighton, Aug. 1st, 1827.

I am better, but not so well as I hoped from *Douch*;—still I cling to expectation that two more of these baths will restore me, as I *progress* towards much better. I have therefore made up my mind, as I do not act till Tuesday, to remain over Friday. I start on Saturday.

I have revelled in delights of weather. The race-course has been a scene of enchantment: not a cloud, and the softest and most soothing of sea-breezes; and on *Cob* I feel still a youth. He is a pet, eating biscuits handed to him out of carriages, for I have met lots of acquaintance. Mrs. Mountain, having gout in her knee, has given me her ticket for a concert in the house here—(Pasta, Curioni, Bochsa,)—and I am going to walk into the room forthwith.

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Brighton, Aug. 3rd, 1827.

Most sincerely do I sympathise with you.* Certainly the mournful event had almost the effect of suddenness. It was most providential, indeed, in my mind, that the impulse of the poor sufferer was to remove from under your

* Upon the death of my mother, to whom he had affectionately supplied the place of a son for many years.—A. M.

roof. You were thereby spared part of your pangs: it would indeed have been doubly distressing.

You have, my dearest, many consolations to cheer you under such an affliction. Life was not very desirable, even to the poor invalid, under such circumstances. Then her sufferings at the last were comparatively but trifling. The prospect of death was not embittered by great violence of bodily suffering, and her beautiful, calm, philosophical resignation endeared her to all about her. You may, indeed, without any self-deception, console yourself that you not only did all in your power to cheer her later days—all that affection could suggest—but all that the most fastidious observer could require. She was truly sensible of this. I am sure, therefore, you may, and I hope will, console yourself, and make every effort that nature will allow to bear up under the affliction of such a loss. Do not allow yourself to be depressed to a greater extent than under such circumstances is uncontrollable. I would have hastened home a day sooner than I promised, if it had been possible; but it was not.

During the races "The Ship" has been crammed, and another Mr. Mathews is in the house. His servant went to the post-office for his letters, and mine were delivered to him. He being, like myself, an idler, did not get up until I, having given up hopes of hearing from you, had gone out—went to the races, and did not get the frank till night.

I had almost an expectation of a letter to-day, giving me an account of your proceedings, the funeral, &c. It is hard to advise, but I could almost hope you will not attend; I would almost say you ought not. But I am sure you will do what is right and proper.

God bless and support you during your trial, is the fervent and sincere prayer of him who, under any affliction or other circumstances, is and ever will be,

Yours truly and affectionately, C. Mathews.

CHAPTER XXV.

Mr. Mathews's Acceptance of an Engagement at Drury-lane Theatre.—Letter from Mr. Charles Lamb to Mr. Barron Field.—Letter to Mrs. Mathews.—Mr. Mathews's Appearance at Drury-lane Theatre.—Great Success of the Performance.—Excellent Trait of Character in Mr. Mathews—He leaves London for Edinburgh—His Illness at York—Arrival at Edinburgh.—Mr. Mathews's Journey homeward from the North—His Mail-coach Companions—A damp Stranger—John Luckie, Baron Hullock, and Mr. Brougham.—Letter from Mr. Horace Smith to Mr. Mathews: "every man should have a hobby."—Necessity of Excitement to Mr. Mathews.—Anecdote.—Mr. Mathews's extraordinary Imitation of Children.—Mr. Liston hoaxed.—Mr. Leigh Hunt's Description of Mr. Mathews's Powers.—Hospitality of Mr. Thomas Hill.—The Sydenham Sundays.

About the end of August, Mr. Price prevailed upon my husband to accept the long-proffered engagement, for the beginning of the next year, at Drury-lane theatre. I say *prevailed*, because the terms offered were, I may say, of so *extravagantly* liberal a nature, that Mr. Mathews, with his characteristic modesty and conscientious consideration for others, conceived it impossible that such an engagement could be reciprocally beneficial to manager and actor. On the other side, in resign-

ing his "At Home" season, the sacrifice required great compensation in any other undertaking; and he was unwilling to risk either a severe loss to himself, by accepting moderate terms from Mr. Price, or a similar disadvantage to so generous a person, by consenting to the splendid offer so urgently pressed upon him. However, Mr. Price at last prevailed; and I believe Mr. Mathews's nightly salary exceeded any that had then been given to a comic performer.

After this engagement was finally arranged, my husband was often depressed at the possibility of his friend having made a bad bargain, and as often declared his own conviction that they would be mutually harassed and disappointed. "For," he would say to me, "if I don't *bring* the money, how can I think of taking such sums out of Price's pocket? It's out of the question. However, he's an obstinate fellow, and I could not refuse him; but we shall both be losers." Mr. Price, notwithstanding, proved himself, as in his general conduct, not only a liberal man, but one of consummate judgment, as the result will show in the present case.

TO BARRON FIELD, ESQ.*

Oct. 4th, 1827.

I am not in humour to return a fit reply to your pleasant letter. We are fairly housed at Enfield, and an angel shall

* A very early and much-regarded friend of ours.—A. M.

not persuade me to wicked London again. We have done six sabbath days in a week for — *none!* The change has worked on my sister's mind, to make her ill; and I won't wait a tedious time before we can hope to enjoy this place in unison. Enjoy it, when she recovers, I know we shall. I see no shadow, but in her illness, for repenting the step! For Mathews—I know my own utter unfitness for such a task. I am no hand at describing costumes, a great requisite in an account of mannered pictures. I have not the slightest acquaintance with pictorial language even. An imitator of me, or rather pretender to be *me*, in his Rejected Articles, has made me minutely describe the dresses of the poissardes at Calais! — I could as soon resolve Euclid. I have no eye for forms and fashions. I substitute analysis, and get rid of the phenomenon by slurring in for it its impression. I am sure you must have observed this defect, or peculiarity, in my writings; else the delight would be incalculable in doing such a thing for Mathews, whom I greatly like — and Mrs. Mathews, whom I almost greatlier like. What a feast 'twould be to be sitting at the pictures painting 'em into words; but I could almost as soon make words into pictures. I speak this deliberately, and not out of modesty. I pretty well know what I can't do.

My sister's verses are homely, but just what they should be; I send them, not for the poetry, but the good sense and good-will of them. I was beginning to transcribe; but Emma is sadly jealous of its getting into more hands, and I won't spoil it in her eyes by divulging it. Come to Enfield, and *read it*. As my poor cousin, the bookbinder, now with God, told me, most sentimentally, that having purchased a picture of fish at a dead man's sale, his heart ached to see how the widow grieved to part with it, being her dear hus-

band's favourite; and he almost apologised for his generosity by saying he could not help telling the widow she was "welcome to come and look at it"—e. g. at *his house*—"as often as she pleased." There was the germ of generosity in an uneducated mind. He had just *reading* enough from the backs of books for the "*nec sinit esse feros*"—had he read inside, the same impulse would have led him to give back the two-guinea thing—with a request to see it, now and then, at *her* house. We are parroted into delicacy.—Thus you have a tale for a Sonnet.

Adieu! with (imagine both) our loves.

C. LAMB.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Yarmouth, Nov. 18th, 1827.

"No letter from me,"—no, indeed! After craning my neck to see the mail arrive, in walks "The Times," and none from you. Indeed, I had nothing pleasant to say; for "this thing" as Price says, "won't do." I must either have theatres with my *moneypulleytugs*, as Murray calls them, or act with managers. The objections to a room, (where there is not, as at Oxford, an excuse—*no theatre*,—or where there is a sufficient number of the upper ranks to pay without the tradesmen)—are numerous, and some rational—the upper classes don't like to mix with the tradesmen, and *vice versâ*, from modesty, or pride, or both. Therefore in a purely trading town it won't do. I tried to conciliate all parties. I am annoyed certainly, because I have had hard work for nothing; but be assured I am not so depressed as you fancy. I am in most particularly good spirits, and my stomach is in such good order that I do not

believe the *whizzing* in my ear* is connected with it. I had yesterday a day of real enjoyment in my way. I rode down to the sands at one o'clock, and when I was tired of riding I walked about, and alternately rested on boats, &c. with the "Chronicles of the Cannongate," and stayed out until five. What d'ye think of that? I have not walked so far for years. "The sea!" the sea, for me. It heals all woes. I flipped my fingers at the inhabitants, and felt that plenty of books and a sea-view will always solace me for misfortunes. I console myself with Cambridge, which I think certain; Drury-lane is certain; Edinburgh and Glasgow nearly so—so *n'importe*. I don't believe the old bantams would kill the new. They are the smallest in England, as I understand, to be sure. What has been done?

Another heavenly day. *My* love to *her*, that is, to my dear Milly. Upon my honour I am well and in spirits, and, as ever, affectionately yours, C. MATHEWS.

On the last night of this year (1827), Mr. Mathews made his appearance at Drury-lane theatre in the characters of *Sir Fretful Plagiary* in "The Critic," and *Buskin* in "Killing no Murder." The whole of the day, I remember, he was exceedingly depressed, and no assurances could give him confidence against his inward conviction that the engagement would be a failure as to attraction. "How *could* it be otherwise?" he would reason: "Two old and hackneyed pieces—novelty *might* have done something," &c. I confess I also had

* Amongst his other inexplicable complaints, he was for a long while tormented with a noise in his ear, which no medical man could remove.—A. M.

my misgivings; and at one moment had settled not to go to a box reserved for me,—but my fears were overruled by a judicious friend, who accompanied me to the theatre.

On our arrival we were met by crowds coming out from the several doors. What could this mean? what had happened? (for the *truth* never occurred to me.) My questions were speedily answered by our entrance into the lobby, where a scene of confusion presented itself, from a press for places by those who had improvidently trusted to the average of unlet boxes, and the anxiety of others to get admission to those which they had secured. In short, when we were seated, and commanded a view of the house, we found it crammed in every part!

The following account of the performance will sufficiently describe the general impression of the night. Mr. Mathews's acting in the two characters had all the effect of novelty, and was eminently successful. Indeed it was difficult to believe that he was repeating words with which the town had been familiar from his lips, at intervals, for more than twenty years.

Mr. Mathews appeared for the first time here in the character of *Sir Fretful Plagiary*, to which he did the most ample justice. He delineated the peevish, jealous, and envious feelings of the thin-skinned author with fine comic effect. His look and manner while *Sneer* is repeating to him a supposed criticism on his dramatic talents

excited the most lively applause. The attempt to assume an appearance of calmness, and even of mirth, while his persecutor is wringing his heart, which ends in a violent burst of ludicrous passion, told most powerfully. It was an effort of consummate skill — humorous, but not extravagant.

The farce of "Killing no Murder" followed. Mr. Mathews and Mr. Liston were the prime agents, and produced great amusement; Mr. Mathews particularly excited great applause by his sea-sick song, and was loudly encored.

The result of this night's performance was a source of much comfort, as well as pride, to Mr. Mathews, although such houses could not be expected after the first night. Such a beginning, however, augured a success which might satisfy all Mr. Price's calculations; but again and again the theatre was filled in the same manner, and the same performances were repeated, with similar effects, successively thirteen nights!

As an instance of candour and generosity, generally considered contrary to the arcanum of management, I must here record that, at the conclusion of only *part* of the term of the engagement, Mr. Price informed Mr. Mathews that he had *then* cleared the whole amount of his engagement, with a considerable profit upon it.

Most satisfactory was this result. Indeed it was altogether creditable to the feelings of both actor and manager. Novelty seemed almost

unnecessary to the prosperity of the theatre; but an admirable farce was prepared by Mr. Peake, called "The Haunted Inn," the mention of which recals to my recollection one of those excellent traits of character which so abounded in my husband, and which I hope I do not exceed propriety in recording.

Mr. Price was anxious for novelty, and Mr. Peake, the friend and *scribe*, as he designated himself, of Mr. Mathews, was applied to. A farce was bespoken from that gentleman, whose peculiar talent was of that ready kind, which, unlike the general waywardness of acknowledged wits, was always prepared for surprise, and found at home to the most unexpected calls. It proved a most admirable farce, with a very fine comic part in it for Mr. Mathews.

On the day the piece was sent to him to read, I sat in the room during his perusal of it, anxious to find whether he liked it. He repeatedly laughed, and from time to time told me how very good the piece was, and what an excellent part was intended for him. When he had finished the last page, he gave the farce into my hand, saying, "Read it directly, and let me return it to Price to-night. I want you to tell me whether you think I can make anything of the *Corporal;* for I feel that the part intended for me is so exactly fitted to Liston that, though I think I could act it, yet I really could not, with a safe conscience,

appropriate it to myself while he is in the same theatre with me. I see *him* in every line."

I own I thought this an over-strained delicacy under existing circumstances—the part purposely prepared for him, and the occasion—no other ready—the embarrassment of Mr. Price—the manifest tendency, under present attraction, of his appearing in a second-rate part, &c. Still he persisted that he should be "ashamed to take such a part from Liston, whom it fitted so well." In conclusion, this generous objection prevailed: he caused the principal part to be sent to Mr. Liston, (who was, of course, unacquainted with its history,) and he made the best of *Corporal Trot;* introduced a song, written by Charles, when a boy, called the "Country Fair," (afterwards sung in "The May Queen,") and thus satisfied the audience with his share in this admirable farce, while Mr. Liston, as he foresaw, was quite delightful in the part resigned to him.

TO H. B. GYLES, ESQ.

DEAR GYLES, Kentish Town, Jan. 12th, 1828.

I am glad you waited for my explanation before you acted upon my last letter. I have often thought that I could make a very amusing volume upon the serious and comic consequences of acting upon suspicion. Nine people out of ten will be too clever, and understand the motives of their neighbours. "I know the cause of this behaviour."—"Oh, don't tell me! I know why she did it," &c

I fall into the error, but not so often as my wife. My favourite phrase is, "Have you *evidence?*"

That "confounded applause" is delicious. "I thank thee, Jew;" I should never have known it but for you.* My success is triumphant — six houses crammed — pit overflowing every night — not a 300*l.* house from the second night before — my worst 500*l.* The greatest pit ever known (last year), Kean, 154*l.*; last Wednesday, 169*l.* 18*s.* I am paid so splendidly that you would be amazed; but "I am forbid" — prison house — "I have an oath;" that is, I am bound in honour! Only think — a run of "The Critic" and "Killing no Murder!" — Unprecedented! With hackneyed pieces, not a seat to be had till Monday-week!

Mine to thine.—Now write and beg pardon, and that immediately. Ever sincerely, yours,

C. MATHEWS.

In March, Mr. Mathews, having an engagement to act in Edinburgh, set off at the close of the first part of his engagement at Drury-lane to fulfil it, but was taken violently ill previously to his arrival in York, where he was compelled to remain for some days.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

York, March 17th, 1828.

I am happy to say that I am now pronounced in a state fit to travel with perfect safety. Thank God,

* An error of the press in a newspaper account of Mr. Mathews's reception at Drury Lane. In describing the applause, they used the word *conf unded,* instead of *confounding.*—A. M.

my bodily health and my spirits have supported me throughout the trial! My greatest anxiety has been for Murray. I should have gone to-day, and, in fact, am well enough; but Belcombe ("oh, if ever there was an angel!") wishes to make assurance doubly sure, and has prevailed on me to go to-morrow, and then only to Newcastle; and, if I do not feel still equal to the journey, I will stop.

We of the fidget family have our advantages unquestionably. It is perhaps, as *Croaker* says, "because we grieve for our misfortunes before they arrive, that we don't feel them when they come;" but certain it is, that my spirits, subject as they are to depression without cause, appear to rally under misfortune—they have not forsaken me for a single moment since my confinement.

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Edinburgh, March 21st, 1828.

Considering that at this time last Friday I was laid on my back, with the perfect conviction that I dare not stir for a week (for that was my sentence from Sir Astley Cooper, when I was on the wing for Manchester), and that I am now two hundred miles further north, with one night's fatigue over, and 50*l.* in my pocket, I think you may have reason to "thank God it was no worse," and rejoice.

Two postponements, you may suppose, did not help our first night's house; and my old friend and adjunct, the snow, arrived on the same day with myself. I told you so. The weather was delicious all the time I *was in bed.* I commenced last night with "Ollapod," and "Before Breakfast." The farce went capitally. To-day I rest, and am

happy that I am not compelled to go act. I am in clover at Murray's—every comfort that I can wish.

I have procured the certificates of our marriage and Charles's baptism at York. I found out from Johnny Winter that Young had been doing "good by stealth, and will blush to find it fame," I dare say. He only knew poor John by my description, and he gave him 2*l.* having sent for him while passing through York. He proposed to me, at the meeting for the Brunswickers, that four or five of us should club and allow Winter about 10*l.* a year; but said not a word that he had himself relieved him.

Your kind assurances are most gratifying to me. I am most delighted that you were spared the horrors and fatigue of a journey, and the additional disappointment of not overtaking me. I am grateful for your determination.

I am now PERFECTLY restored, without fear of relapse. I promised Belcombe to see the celebrated Liston * on my arrival. He has seen me, and pronounces me *well.* Therefore be at ease. C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Glasgow, March 31st, 1828.

I write to announce my safe arrival here last night in *perfect* health and spirits. All is well and prosperous.

"You devil" found me out in four minutes and a half after my arrival, and was very mad before we parted, swearing he would never get drunk any more—he "was so ashamed of his behaviour before that angelic creature when Hook *made* him drink too much!"—He got very tipsy with whisky toddy in repenting of his former sin. God bless you! C. MATHEWS.

* The surgeon, and relation of the great comedian.—A. M.

Mr. Mathews, on his way homewards from the north, just after the assizes, on entering the mail, was fortunate enough to find only two gentlemen, who, being seated opposite to each other, left him the fourth seat for his legs. This comfort was a very unusual instance of good luck to my husband, who seldom entered a stage-coach without encountering either a baby in arms, a sick child, or a man in a consumption. The passengers were very agreeable men; one, a Scotchman — always *a safe card.* At the close of the evening, the latter encased his head and throat in an enormous fold of white linen, and then sunk back to sleep, looking like *the veiled prophet;* while the other, an Englishman, was characteristically satisfied with a "comfortable." My husband, who was never a wrapper-up, sat prepared to receive the night as a friend rather than as an enemy, content and happy at the advantage already mentioned.

Just as the trio had sunk into their first forgetfulness, before the coachman or guard could "murder sleep" with the startling intimation of "Going no farther!" they were awakened by the sudden stoppage of the vehicle, a light at the door of an inn, and a party of rough discordant voices, bidding, however, a cordial farewell to a large, becoated, and ominous-looking stranger, who, in a broad Yorkshire dialect, wished his companions "a good noight," reminding them that he had

paid *his* share of the reckoning. To the great discomfiture of our three *insides*, the door of the mail was opened, and the fourth passenger invited by the guard to enter without further loss of time.

Since the three gentlemen had "dropped off," the weather had suddenly changed from frost to snow. A heavy sleet had fallen, and the man I have mentioned quitted the open air, and entered the coach with, appropriately enough, a frieze coat on, powdered all over by the snow. All shrunk from the *damp stranger*, who felt that active embarrassment which attends the entrance of an individual into a dark carriage, amongst an uncounted party. In total ignorance of the whereabout of the vacant seat, and to which no courteous hand directed him, he was pushed, first by one, then the other, and at last my husband, in keeping him off from his own person, forcibly lodged the huge, rough-coated animal into the space he was destined to fill. All were disconcerted at this intrusion, and sufficiently chilled and disturbed to be in a very ill-humour with the odious *fourth*. They, however, seemed tacitly to agree not to speak to the new-comer, but endeavour to regain their before happy unconsciousness. *They* had not, however, been spending a jovial evening, as *he* had whose "absence" they would have "doated upon." *He* was in anything but a sleeping mood; and, after a few minutes

rustling about, in order to *settle himself*, treading upon my husband's toes, elbowing his neighbour, without begging pardon for his so doing, &c. (all which was received with a sullen silence,) he asked, in a voice which sounded like thunder to the sleepers, while he held the pull of the window in one hand—"Coompany! oop or down?" *Answer made they none.*

Again he inquired, still dubious of what might be "agreeable," and desirous to prove himself a polished gentleman, "Coompany! oop *or* down?" Still receiving no answer, a smothered oath bespoke his disgust at such an uncourteous return for this polite consideration for his fellow-passengers; and, with some exasperation of tone, he repeated aloud, "*Dom* it!—I say, Coompany—*oop or—down?*" Still not a word; and, with another "*dom*," he allowed "t'window" to remain *down*.

It was clear to the half-perceptions of the drowsy travellers that he of the frieze coat had laid in enough spirit to keep him from chilliness, and they hoped the potency of his precaution would soon make him unconscious, as they were disposed to be. But, no: he continued restless and talkative. All at once, however, a

"Change came o'er the spirit of his dream;"

he, it appeared, for the first time, perceived the alteration in the weather. His excitement at the door of the little inn, where he had left his friends, had

caused him totally to overlook the snow, which then fell upon him; and he saw it now with a degree of stupid wonder, and exclaimed, in audible soliloquy, "Eh! ma God! — what's this? whoigh! the whole country's covered wi snow! —eh! it's awful. *Coompany!* — wake up and see t' snow! — eh! they 're all asleep. Good God! whoigh it's wonderful and awful! — Good Lord, what a noight — *what* a noight! Eh! God presarve all poor mariners on the western coast this noight!" Then roaring out once more, with increased vehemence of tone, "*Coompany!* wake oop, I say, and see t' noight! — Eh! they 're dead, I reckon! — eh, ma God! what a noight! — awful!"

In this manner did he go on, until the patience of the English gentleman was tired out, and he at length spoke: — "I wish, sir, you 'd show some feeling for *us*, and hold your tongue. We were all asleep when you came in, and you 've done nothing but talk and disturb us ever since. You 're a positive *nuisance*."

"Eh!" said he of the frieze coat; "I loike that, indeed! Aw 've as much right here, I reckon, as oothers—*dom!* aw've paid my fare, har'n't I?" said he, (his voice rising as he remembered his claims to consideration,) "Aw'm a respectable man—my name's John Luckie—I owes nobody onything. I pays King's taxes—I 'm a respectable *man*, I say. Aw help to support Church and State."

On he went, with all the senseless swagger of cup valour and self-laudation, till he of the "*comfortable*" again grumbled out his anger. Again the huge *drover* (for such he was) thundered forth his *rights* and summed up his title to respect—"Eh! *dom!*—what have I done? I coomm'd into t'coich loike a gentleman!—didn't I? I was civil!—wasn't I? I said, *Coompany, oop* or *down?* But ye none o' ye had the poloiteness to answer! ye were not *loike* gentlemen!!! Dom! I'se a respectable *man,* aw say—I've no' book-larning, but I pays King's taxes! My name's John Luckie: I care for nobody. I'm a respectable man, I say." Then looking again out of the window, and relapsing into his ejaculatory mood and stupid abstraction,—"Eh! what an awful noight! Lord be merciful to all mariners this noight! Lord be merciful to all poor souls on the western coast!" he hiccupped out, and again the *gentleman* assailed him with a command that he would be *silent.* John Luckie at this became louder and more intolerable. And at length his sense of oppression became so strong that his independence reached its climax, and he boldly declared that he would *not* hold his tongue, or be quiet—"no, not for Baron Hullock, nor the great Mr. Brougham (or, as he pronounced the name Mr. *Bruffum,*) *himself* was in t'coich."

My husband, who found all tendency to sleep broken up by this obstreperous fellow, now con-

ceived a desire to amuse himself with his fellow-passenger. Just, therefore, as John Luckie's last declaration was uttered, Mr. Mathews leant forward to him, and in a half-whisper said, with affected caution, "Hush! you are not aware, but you have been speaking all this time to Baron Hullock himself!"

The drover seemed to quail under this intimation:—"Whoigh! you don't say so?"—"*Fact*, I assure you; and opposite to him is *Lady* Hullock!" (The Scotchman with the white drapery over his head began to titter at this). "Whoigh! good God! don't tell me *that!* Eh! what shall I *do?* Good Lord! what have I said? Art thou sure?"—"I am indeed," said Mr. Mathews; "they are Baron and Lady Hullock, and *I* am Mr. Brougham."—"Eh!" roared the man in a tone of actual terror, "let me go! let me go!"—struggling to open the coach door—"let me go! I 'm no coompany for sitch gentlefolks; aw 've no book-larning; I 'm no but John Luckie. Let me get out — here, guard! Stop! stop! I waint roide here ony longer!" The guard was insensible to this; and on went the coach, and still John Luckie struggled; and in his rough and clumsy movements a little of my husband's ventriloquy proved a useful auxiliary to urge his welcome departure; and a child suddenly cried out as if hurt. "Eh! ma God! what, is there a

bairn i' t' coach too? Eh! my Lord Baron, pray forgive me, I meant no offence. My name 's John Luckie. Aw 'm a respectable mon, pays King's taxes. I said, Coompany, oop or down? I meant to be civil. Eh! my Lady Hullock, I hope I 've not hurt thy bairn." The child's cries now increased. "Eh! ma poor bairn, where *art* thee? *Dom!* what *moost* I do? Guard! stop and let me out! Eh! what a noight! Guard! I 'm not fit coompany for Baron Hullock and *Mr. Bruffem*, I know. Let me out, I say!" At last his voice at the window reached the higher powers, and the coach stopped, and *as* soon, out rolled this porpoise of a man, who again begging the *Baron* and his *Lady* to overlook his inadvertency, and asking pardon of "*Mr. Bruffem*," he was with some difficulty hoisted upon the top of the mail, and off it drove.

The two inside gentlemen (who had been trying to stifle their amusement) now laughed outright, and thanking Mr. Mathews for his device, they all three recomposed themselves, now and then catching by the wind a broken phrase from John Luckie, as he gave vent to his feelings to the coachman and guard:—"Baron Hullock"—"Respectable mon"—"Bairn"—"Oop or down"—"My Lady Hullock"—"Mr. Bruffem,"—"Church and State," &c.; all which must have puzzled his listeners without, who doubtless attri-

buted his account to the quantity of rum-toddy which they might suppose had filled his brain with such unreal mockeries.

When the sleeping trio awoke, they found *John Luckie* had been *dropped* at his destination, where he would again, no doubt, recount, with a flourish of his own, his adventures with his dignified fellow-passengers, "Baron and Lady Hullock, and Mr. Bruffem."

TO C. MATHEWS, ESQ.

DEAR MATHEWS, Brighton.

How can you wonder that a foreigner should fail to find you out at your friend's house,* when it is well known that Bloomsbury is a *terra incognita* even to Englishmen, since it has been placed under ban and proscription by Theodore Hook. How people with the smallest pretension to fashion can find their way to the British Museum, I cannot understand. *Quere, are* there any fashionables among its visiters?

Don't pretend to be indifferent to excitement, when you know you cannot live without it. Almost all professors (like the house-painters and chimney-sweepers) have their own peculiar diseases, the histrionic malady being an insatiable craving for stimulants of some sort; and the most successful performers being generally the most subject to the complaint. I have elsewhere said—

* When in London for a day or two, Mr. Mathews usually stayed in Gower Street, at a friend's house, where he received his morning visiters.—A. M.

"That if one tolerable page appears
In Folly's volume, 'tis the actor's leaf,
Who dries his own by drawing others' tears,
And raising present mirth makes glad his future years."

But this must have been said for the sake of the rhyme, for my reason knew well enough that, even if it were true as to tragedians (which I doubt), the *comic* actor generally saddens himself by enlivening others, a fact which has been abundantly confirmed from the day of the celebrated Italian *Buffone* down to our own. This may seem rather hard, as he reverses the fate of many a poet, who dies to live, while the performer—

"His life a flash, his memory a dream,
Oblivious, downward drops in Lethe's stream,"

as soon as ever the breath is out of his body. You must recollect, *amico mio*, that he has his apotheosis while he is living, and a glorious one it is. Take, for instance, "Mathews at Home;" his theatre crowded to the ceiling, himself the focus of thousands of riveted eyes, and holding such an absolute power of fascination over the passions of his audience, that at a single bidding they shall either melt into tears or burst into roars of irrepressible laughter, while the whole building seems to vibrate with their tumultuous applause. Is not this an apotheosis? and is there any mortal society, or resource, that will not appear stale, flat, and unprofitable, after such a deification? This is the feeling, coupled with the lassitude occasioned by over-exertion, both mental and bodily, that creates the craving for stimulants, which the sufferers have too often sought in the bottle, the dice-box, or in reckless dissipation. How natural! I had almost said, how venial is the mistake; and yet how little indulgence does the public evince even for errors of its own creation. We are like

weak mothers, who spoil their children, and then whip them for being spoilt.

You should thank Heaven fasting every day of your life, that you have never been tempted to seek relief in any of these perilous expedients, but have found a sufficient resource and stimulant in the formation of your Theatrical Museum and Picture Gallery. Every man should have a hobby; but to you it is indispensable; and it is fortunate that you selected one which delights your friends as well as yourself. There you sit at Kentish Town, (I promise never to call it Highgate again,) with a crowd of Thespian heads all around you, yourself enacting the part of audience, and listening with delight to the eloquent associations with which you are encircled, associations that embrace the whole range of modern histrionic and artistical talent. This is the only entertainment worthy your enjoyment, after a triumphant and convulsed bumper at the Strand; and you have shown your good sense, as well as good taste, in selecting it.

It is the want of this hobby that makes you so fidgety and nervous when you are absent from home; and Brighton only finds more favour in your eyes than other places because it is more gay and stimulant, and offers more numerous substitutes for the museum. How often have I heard you exclaim, "There is nothing out of London like Brighton in the season. The whole town is a fair. If I lean out of my window at the Old Ship, I nod or chat to every fifth man that passes. If I mount my little white nag, and ride from Kemp Town to Brunswick Terrace, I am sure of half a dozen invitations to dinner. This I call enjoying life."

But the medal had its reverse, even at Brighton. How inexorably have I heard you anathematise "the infernal

dark hour or two before dinner!" How angrily have I heard you condemn the folly of seven o'clock meals, and how beseechingly have you implored an early hour on receiving an invitation. This was all from your want of constant excitement, and your inability to occupy the gloomy hours that intervened between the ride of the morning and the hilarious table of the evening. In short, you wanted the museum and gallery, your books, pictures, and home. And yet you are not of an excitable temperament, and are not aware that you require stimulants more than other people! If you had said performers instead of people, I might have conceded the point; but your asserting it broadly, without any qualification, only proves, that whatever else you may know, you don't know yourself. Which of us does? I do; for I am sure, that in spite of all my saucy, long-winded epistles, I am, dear Mathews,

Really and truly yours,

HORATIO SMITH.

Mr. Smith's discernment is especially shown in this letter. He looked completely into my husband's nature. When he said stimulants were necessary to his happiness, he spoke the truth; nay, his health was dependent upon them. Excitement was the one thing needful to hold up his mind, which invariably sunk without it. This made him the sensitive creature he was. Nay, his genius was nurtured and kept alive by what, in a less mercurial constitution, would have been called agitation; and Mr. Smith justly congratulates him upon his *one hobby*, which stood so exclusively in stead of less worthy excitement;

for, as he says, he neither sought stimulants in "the bottle, the dice-box, nor in reckless dissipation."

Mr. Mathews had been, I believe, a tolerable billiard-player; but his lameness made it latterly too fatiguing an amusement to be pursued, even when he found a table in a private house. He did not rightly understand any other game; cards he did not like, unless he found himself, at any jovial season in the country, amongst a party of young people; then his enjoyment of a *round game* was even childish. He would be noisy and full of all sorts of absurdity, and gather up his earnings with boyish delight, in order, when the game was over, to give them away; or else, sometimes, to pocket his gains with affected triumph, in imitation of a child's chuckle, though he would not till the end part with his fish for money, however he distressed the table by his monopoly. Indeed, like Goldsmith, his behaviour with children was that of the most simple child. He generally addressed them in the tones and manner of childhood, always making himself the age of those to whom he talked. At first the little creatures would look surprised, sometimes frightened; but this effect soon wore off as he persevered, and it always ended in his being accepted as a playmate. The first wonder over, ever after he was considered by them as a boy, for such was his voice and manner.

I remember our travelling into Suffolk once, with Mrs. Richard Wilson, on a Christmas visit, and stopping at a village inn for refreshment, while her horses baited. Soon after, we saw my husband near the door, with half a dozen boys of about eight years old, playing at marbles, bawling and wrangling about the game, in their childish and rude manner, and every one of his companions as grave and earnest with him as if they were all of the same age, and had been used to him all their lives. There he was squabbling. "You Bill Atkins! I say, you 've no right to that taw."—"*I have*," said Bill.—"I say, you haven't!"—"*I say I have!*"—"Ah! you cheat! I won't play with you *no* more." And thus eventually he picked a quarrel with one of them, and taking off his coat, offered to fight. He was met with spirit by the boy in question, and, finding this, he resumed his good-humour, and made a present to his adversary of the marbles he had won, and left them all pleased with the "*large boy*."

We inquired how he became so regularly installed amongst these urchins in so short a time. He told us, that he went up to them as they were playing, and, assuming the tone and words suited to their age and the occasion, asked if he might play with them? They all looked up with something like alarm mixed with wonder, and stared at him in silence for a minute. He re-

iterated his wish to join them, and they all looked gravely and sheepishly at each other. He still urged them, till at last, after some demur, the smallest of the party boldly cried, "*Let* him play; what harm!"—"Very well," said another, encouraged by his friend's example; "very well; but has he got any marbles?"—"No," said the new comer; "but I've a penny."—"Well, then, let him buy some of yours, Tom; you 've got plenty to sell." The bargain was completed, and he *knuckled down*, soon learned several of their names, and thus we found him with them. It was most diverting to observe how completely the boys had ceased to regard him as anything but what he represented; no giggling, no suspicion, but a thorough confidence at last in the reality of his being a child, though of "larger growth" than themselves. As he quitted them, he said he must go to his "Ma," and joined us; the boys looking after him and at us with curiosity, for a moment, but immediately resuming their play, seemingly without any further reflection upon the incident.

With some children (at the houses where he familiarly visited) he never allowed himself to appear other, when they were by, than one of their own age, and after the first surprise, alarm, or perhaps laughter, they fell into the notion as completely as if they had forgotten his size. In fact, his face bore little contradiction to his

tones, language, and manner: such was the wonderful power he possessed over his features, that he had command of every possible expression that belongs to the human countenance, from puling infancy to impotent old age, from inanity to the highest point of intellectual meaning. A little girl of Mr. Rowland Stephenson's for several years never doubted his being what he pretended to be, and invariably called him "that boy-man."

When he found persons too shy to talk with him, he would talk for them, holding a colloquy with himself, which seldom failed to stir up the *mis*-represented into something like self-defence, when any opinion or act of theirs was distorted, or proved not to agree with their own feelings or impressions. An earnest dialogue then followed, which generally ended in perfect good-will, and a belief in their equality in understanding and years.

I cannot give a stronger instance of his power in this way than a slight deception he practised upon Mr. Liston, who, from long and intimate knowledge, must have been pretty well acquainted with all his friend's varieties of voice, &c.:— Mr. Mathews called on some sudden business one day when Mr. Liston was making a rather late toilette. He was in haste, and after waiting a few minutes for Mr. Liston's appearance, who had been apprized of his call, asked leave to go up to his friend's dressing-room. There he

knocked, and in a child's voice requested to have the door opened, as he had a message from Mr. Mathews to deliver.* Mr. Liston, believing that his own boy stood at the door, desired him to go down and say, he would follow him as soon as possible. The applicant, however, persevered in his request to be admitted; and his father persisted in refusing, till at last, harassed with the child's unaccountable perversity and unwonted disobedience, parental patience could extend no further, and half wondering, half angry at the child's pertinacity, he hastily approached the door, uttering as he did so a severe reproof at *such* brawling importunity, but instead of *little Johnny*, he found his full-grown baby friend!

Mr. Leigh Hunt has well described my husband's power of imitating children, and has at the same time touched, in his own delightful manner, upon other points of excellence in Mr. Mathews.*

* "Among the visiters at Sydenham was Mr. Mathews, the comedian. I have had the pleasure of seeing him there more than once, and of witnessing his imitations, which, admirable as they are on the stage, are still more so in a private room. Once and a way, his wife used to come with him, and charitably make tea for us. The other day I had the pleasure of seeing them at their own table; and I thought, that if old Time, with unusual courtesy, had spared the sweet countenance on the one, he had given more force and interest to that of the other in the very ploughing of it up. Strong lines have been cut, and the face has stood them well. I have seldom been more surprised than in coming close to Mr. Mathews on that occasion, and in seeing the bust that he has in his gallery of his

I did not want Mr. Leigh Hunt's "Sweet Remembrancer" of the happy days alluded to, in which I shared at the "Merry Bachelor's" cottage at Sydenham for so many years, during which I might aptly have quoted the lines in one of O'Keefe's operas—

> "Of all the days that I have seen,
> I dearly love but one day—
> And that's the day that comes between
> The Saturday and Monday;"

for then our little carriage was in readiness, early in the afternoon, to convey us to this rustic dwelling—all simplicity without, all brilliancy within. There, hebdomadally, were found a knot of the

friend Mr. Liston. Some of these comic actors, like comic writers, are as unfarcical as can be imagined, in their interior. The taste for humour comes to them by the force of contrast. The last time I had seen Mr. Mathews his face appeared to me insignificant to what it was then. On the former occasion he looked like an irritable in-door pet; on the latter, he seemed to have been grappling with the world, and to have got vigour by it. His face had looked out upon the Atlantic, and said to the old waves, 'Buffet on; I have seen trouble as well as you.' The paralytic affection, or whatever it was, which twisted his mouth when young, had formerly appeared to be master of his face, and given it a character of indecision and alarm; it now seemed a minor thing; a twist in a piece of old oak. And what a bust was Mr. Liston's; the mouth and chin, with the throat under it, hung like an old bag, but the upper part of the head as fine as possible; there is speculation, a look out, and an elevation of character in it, as unlike the Liston on the stage as *Lear* is to *King Pippin*. One might imagine Laberius to have had such a face. The reasons why Mr. Mathews's imitations are still better in private than in public are,

first talents of the day; and, amongst the perpetual advantages I derived from being the wife of a clever man, I was allowed the delight of always being a partaker of these intellectual treats. Our excellent and kind friend, Mr. Thomas Hill's well-regulated hospitality was the theme of everybody's

that he is more at his ease personally, more secure of his audience ('fit, though few') and able to interest them with traits of private character, which could not be introduced on the stage. He gives, for instance, to persons who he thinks will take it rightly, a picture of the manners and conversation of Sir Walter Scott, highly creditable to that celebrated person, and calculated to add regard to admiration. His commonest imitations are not superficial; something of the mind and character of the individual is always insinuated, often with a dramatic dressing, and plenty of sauce piquante. At Sydenham he used to give us a dialogue among the actors, each of whom found fault with another for some defect or excess of his own: Kemble objecting to stiffness, Munden to grimace, and so on. His representation of Incledon was extraordinary; his nose seemed actually to become aquiline. It is a pity I cannot put upon paper, as represented by Mr. Mathews, the singular gabblings of that actor: the lax and sailor-like twist of mind with which everything hung upon him, and his profane pieties in quoting the Bible, for which, and swearing, he seemed to have an equal reverence. He appeared to be charitable to everybody but Mr. Braham. He would be described as saying to his friend Holman, for instance, 'My dear George, don't be abusive. George, don't insult; don't be indecent; by G—d! you should take the beam out of your own eye! (What the devil is it?) You know — in the Bible something' — (the *a* very broad) — 'about *a* beam, my dear George—and — and — and — and *a* mote — you'll find it in *any* part of the Bible; yes, George, my dear boy, the Bible, by God!' (And then with real fervour and reverence) — 'The Holy Scriptures, G—d d— me!' He swore as dreadfully as a devout knight-

praise and pleasure who ever visited him; and, with the one exception just made, his house was the resort of the highest order of intellect and literary acquirement. The accommodation of Mr. Hill's house and table did not, luckily, admit of more than could conduce to their mutual pleasure. Each

errant. Braham, whose trumpet blew down his wooden walls, he could not endure. He is represented as saying one day, with a strange mixture of imagination and matter-of-fact, that "he only wished his beloved master, Mr. Jackson, could come down from heaven and take the Exeter stage to London, to hear that d—d Jew!'

As Mr. Hook made his extemporary verses on us all, so Mr. Mathews one day gave an extempore imitation of us all round, with the exception of a fierce young critic, who happened to be present, and in whose appearance and manner he pronounced, that there was no handle for mimicry. This may have been intended as a politeness towards a comparative stranger, perhaps as a piece of policy; and the laughter was not missed by it; at all events, the critic was both good-humoured and self-satisfied enough to have borne the mimicry; and no harm would have come of it.

One morning, after stopping all night, I was getting up to breakfast, when I heard the noise of a little boy having his face washed. Our host was a merry bachelor, and to the rosiness of a priest might, for aught I know, have added the paternity; but I had never heard of it, and still less expected to find a child in his house. More obvious and obstreperous proofs, however, of the existence of a boy with a dirty face could not have been met with. You heard the child cry, and objecting; then the woman remonstrating; then the cries of the child were snubbed, and swallowed up in the hard towel, and at intervals out came his voice, blubbering and deploring, and was again swallowed up. At breakfast, the child being pitied, I ventured to speak about it, and was laughing and sympathising in perfect good faith, when Mr. Mathews came

party was well chosen and assorted, never exceeding a dozen; and I had the honour to occupy the only spare room, all other guests, who were too fastidious to be content with the accommodation of the neighbouring inn, returning to town. Now and then a lady would share my short interval of drawing-room retirement; but this did not so often occur as it otherwise would had the distance from London been less, or the cottage possessed more accommodation in the way of beds. Thus five times out of six I was the only lady; and I monopolised all the advantage of such a position, being pressed always to outstay custom, and afterwards seldom finding myself waiting tea for the gentlemen, whose courtesy was strained to answer generally the first summons from the drawing-room.

What happy days were those! — days of unmixed pleasure, laid up in grateful memory of the friend who dispensed so much happiness to

in, and I found that the little urchin wac he. The same morning he gave us his immortal imitation of old Tate Wilkinson, patentee of the York Theatre. Tate had been a little too merry in his youth, and was very melancholy in old age; he had had a wandering mind and a decrepit body; and being manager of a theatre, a husband, and a rat-catcher, he would speak in his wanderings 'variety of wretchedness;' he would interweave, for instance, all at once, the subject of a new engagement at his theatre, the rats, a veal pie, Garrick and Mrs. Siddons, and Mrs. Tate and the Doctor. I do not pretend to give a specimen, Mr. Mathews alone can do it."— *Leigh Hunt's "Lord Byron and his Contemporaries."*

my early years, although only for the sake of my dear husband, whom he had known from his boyhood. Those who, like myself, have survived the *Sydenham Sundays*, will, like me, remember them with retrospective gratification; for, though I was the only one present that did not contribute to the treat, yet those who did were not without their reward.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Letter from Mr. Harley to Mr. Mathews. — Letter from Mr. Horace Smith to Mr. Mathews: Moral Epidemic of the present Century: Mr. Mathews persuaded to write his Memoirs. — He takes a Share in the Adelphi Theatre with Mr. Yates. — Performances at Brighton with Mr. Yates. — Anecdote of Mr. Liston. — Letters to Mrs. Mathews: Berkeley Castle: Performances at Cheltenham. — Mr. Mathews's Dinner Miseries.—His frequent Annoyances from Detention of Letters. — Letters to Mrs. Mathews. — Letter from Mr. C. J. Mathews to Mrs. Mathews: Journal of a Residence in Italy.

THE following brief but pleasant letter was written in consequence of Mr. Mathews having studied a new character expressly for Mr. Harley's benefit at Drury-lane:—

TO C. MATHEWS, ESQ.

91, Great Russell-street, Bedford-square,
MY DEAR MATHEWS, May 29th, 1828.

I have to convey to you a *leash* of *facts*.

Fact first—Oldskirt sat upon you like an *old* friend; and all who honoured my "At Home" were unanimous upon that point. *

* *Jonathan Oldskirt*, in the comedy of "Who wants a Guinea?" His usual part of *Solomon Gundy* was performed by the *Beneficiaire*.—A. M.

Fact second—I sincerely thank you for your kind co-operation last evening.

Fact third—

I am, dear Mathews,

Your obliged and faithful Servant,

J. P. HARLEY.

To C. Mathews, Esq. &c.

In the following interesting letter Mr. Horatio Smith urges Mr. Mathews to proceed with his autobiography:—

TO C. MATHEWS, ESQ.

DEAR MATHEWS, Brighton, 10, Hanover Crescent.

Our fiery friend, "the Copper Captain," saw you last Wednesday, told you he was coming to Brighton, and yet you neither charged him with message or missive for me. How is this? Are you in a pet with my last letter? with my last letter wherein I took you sharply to task for asserting that you did not require excitement more than other men? Luckily you are never sulky—to little fumes and peevish outbreaks you will hardly deny your liability; but, as these never last longer than "one with moderate haste may count a hundred," do let me hear from you soon, "if thou lovest me, Hal." To put you in good humour again, I must tell you that Mahommed, yesterday, pointed out to a friend of mine a suspended crutch, which he averred to have been yours, and that he had enabled you to throw it away by shampooing you! There! if this assertion of your restored equigravity does not restore your equanimity, nothing will. So don't get into a passion, or you never will get out.

After despatching my last saucy letter, it occurred to me

that ages and eras have their peculiar diseases, both mental and corporeal, as well as the different trades and professions; and that the epidemic of the present century is that very craving for excitement which I have attributed to theatrical performers. So that you and your Thespian brethren, if my notions be correct, only share the general contagion; though in your case it may assume a more inflammatory type. Historians have noticed that a similar intellectual activity and hungering for stimulants characterised the sixteenth century,—a restlessness which they have attributed to the Reformation and the Discovery of America: the former giving a new freedom, developement, and impetus to the reasoning faculties of man; while the latter, by the romantic adventures and marvellous discoveries with which it startled the world, gave an inappeasable excitement to the imaginative faculties. Without the former we might never have had Milton's "Paradise Lost," nor without the latter, Shakspeare's "Enchanted Island," which was actually suggested by a published voyage to the Straits of Magellan. There is a fine passage *àpropos* to this subject at the beginning of Hazlitt's Lectures on the Elizabethan Dramatic Literature; but I forget the exact turn it takes, and I have not got the book.

Well—the nineteenth century has many similar characteristics. The French Revolution, with the wars, convulsions, and marvellous changes it engendered, was a political Reformation; and, instead of discovering *one* new world, the improvements in optics, and the consequent perfectionment of telescopes and microscopes, have drawn up the curtain of Nature, and revealed to us hundreds of new worlds, and myriads of animated beings either in the heavens above or in the earth beneath, until we are all agog for prodigies and marvels. Steam-boats and rail-

roads, too, have given us a new dominion over time and space; and the improvements in both expand with such rapidity that nothing seems impossible, and we have all made up our minds to stare and keep moving, without exactly knowing what we are to expect, nor where we are to stop. All is feverish restlessness, a hungering and thirsting for excitement; mental dram-drinking is the rage, and we swallow stimulants till we are all intoxicated together. The steam-engine and the railroad pervade the moral as well as the physical world. All is hurry-scurry, slap-bang, dash! whiz! Books are written in a week, and read in an hour—fortunes are made or lost in a morning. Commerce is ruinous speculation; the stage is all melo-drama and diablerie; the pulpit appeals to the passions—not the reason; society is a maddening vortex; there is no repose, no sobriety, no quiescence in any direction; and yet we are all crying out for more excitement, more stimulants, more intoxication! Verily, the whole world ought to be fined for drunkenness and sent to the tread-mill,—and so ends my diatribe.

I won't end my letter, however, without repeating what I so strenuously urged upon your attention when we last parted in Castle-square, that you should, by all means, and without loss of a single day, follow up the happy idea of your auto-biography. I pronounce it, *meo periculo*, to be a happy idea in every sense; for it is sure to be happily executed — sure to make your readers happy — sure to contribute to your own happiness; and the recovery of that long-lost file of playbills, containing a record of your whole histrionic life, till within these three years, does seem to be an occurrence expressly contrived by your good genius to urge you to the undertaking. If you do not accept the omen, take the consequences — that's all.

Haud inexpertus loquor as to the delight of composition, even in fiction; but how immeasurably more absorbing must it become when you are your own hero, and narrating nothing but the truth! Who has seen so much of men and things?—whose life has been so fertile of jest and youthful jollity?—so conversant with pleasant hoaxes and realities? and who possesses so rich a fund of sparkling anecdote to enliven his narrative? You will absolutely revel in delicious associations and recollections, and will keep your own present, and all future tables in a roar, by recalling tables that you have similarly convulsed. If all this fail to move you, recollect what a thumping price you will get for your book; and remember, more especially, that, if you heed not my injunctions, I shall cease to subscribe myself, dear Mathews, yours truly,

HORATIO SMITH.

I shall not enter into the particulars of an event which was decided upon at this period, but leave my husband's succeeding letter to explain it to the reader.

TO HENRY B. GYLES, ESQ.

DEAR GYLLY, Kentish Town, June 17th, 1828.

I am delighted indeed to hear you *say* you are settled, and sincerely hope that you may be in the same mind two years hence. I had acted *Oldskirt* on Saturday night, and, coming home, found your letter with the quotations. Ha! ha! droll enough! Now you will be astonished! Prepare for wonder! You are the first, too; nobody knows it yet but four on earth. Don't look over leaf—don't mention it now. Will you believe it? You won't.

Well, then, I have taken — no, not taken — but it's all as good as done; that is, I shall have it — but nothing settled yet — that is, not signed — but it's all right! I know you will stare more than you have made me stare. I am about to commence manager! — I am to have the Adelphi with Yates! Ha! stare! do! and say, when he, that has so sworn! Yes, he——I cannot enter into particulars, but you must *think*.

I will come and see you — I will. I have a friend at Wooton, who has asked me. I have often promised Colonel Berkeley, who reminded me last Saturday of it, &c. I will come — indeed I will, this summer.

My wife's love to your wife. Ever thine,

MAT.

Pre-eminently successful and lucrative as his engagement at Drury-lane had proved, the size of the stage made acting a serious suffering to him; his lameness having increased excessively, and in proportion to the frequency of performing upon it. Mr. Price offered him a renewal of his late engagement for the following season, on the same liberal terms; but his share in the Adelphi offering another source of gain, with less exertion, and with less bodily pain, from the contracted sphere of action, he was induced to refuse Mr. Price his future co-operation. When all arrangements were complete regarding the new partnership, Mr. Yates and my husband set forth together on a tour, combining their forces for their mutual profit.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Brighton, 17th July 1828.

Brighton is empty—so says everybody: but our boxes were crammed full last night, and if the gallery had patronised us, the house would have been great. We had above 80*l.*, however; and, if we may augur for the future from our first start in union, Yates and I may challenge all England. Nothing could be more effective than our performance, from beginning to end. Really charming, and everybody satisfied. It is really no trouble to me, as you may suppose, after the way I have been used to exert myself.* I am boarding at Dr. Yates's, and I sleep at a hotel near. The Listons are here, and Hook; and I had a call on the first night from D'Egville. I have been riding, and reading, and bathing, and am as hungry as usual. All is well. If a Scotch goose could speak, what vegetable would it mention when you were about to kill it?—*Asparagus.* (Ah! spare a goose.)

C. MATHEWS.

During one of these performances at Brighton, while Mr. Mathews was singing that part of his "Auction Song," where he solicits biddings for a particular "lot," after looking round the house, and making several appeals, and exclaiming "only three pounds offered—only three," a voice from one of the public boxes, which it was impossible to mistake, cried out "Four!" He turned to the

* Mr. Yates represented the locomotive portion of the Entertainment,—the dramatic act.—A. M.

spot, to which every other eye also was directed. Though taken by surprise, he was not, however, thrown off his guard, but, bowing smartly *à la Robins*, exclaimed, "Much obliged; *yours*, Sir." This bidding was made by Mr. Liston, who was seized, as he afterwards declared, with an irresistible desire to put up for a lot, in order to surprise his brother actor, and was confounded after he had done it, and heard the roar of laughter he had caused, and the notice he had drawn upon himself.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Cheltenham, 27th July 1828.

Arrived here to dinner, and went to the play, where we saw the distinguished amateurs in Henry IV. The Colonel * in the Prince, the Captain in Falstaff, and C. Kemble in Hotspur. 'Pon my word, very well; very well indeed — for gentlemen. The Colonel really *good*.

We are going off to-day to Berkeley Castle, to dine. I am beautifully well.

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Cheltenham, 30th July, 1828.

You are an able advocate, and you plead so well for the dairy, that I cannot but give my consent; though it is with a pang, I confess. You are unwilling to part with the willow yourself, that I can see; but your arguments are unanswerable. There are so many advantages attend-

* Now Lord Segrave.

ing the keeping cows, that I should be quite mortified to be disappointed; and I am quite reconciled to the sacrifice, after having slept upon it: but I hope it will be a very pretty object. An ice-house, mind, is my *sine quâ non* for giving up my tree. Many a rage that will save me. I suppose such a large tree could not be moved? Such things have been done, I have been told, have they not? But whether or not, take him down. I quite rely, however, on the new object being a captivating feature.

I dined at Berkeley Castle on Sunday, and slept in a bed which was put up there in the year 1330. The castle is a most beautiful place in its way; the exterior by far the finest part of it. The room in which King Edward was murdered remains in the same state ever since that event; not a bit of furniture removed. I had an invitation of the kindest nature from Mr. and Mrs. Taylor, at "Ooton,"* and for Yates also; but it was impossible to go, on account of business.

Gloucester, the worst town in England, gave us 60*l.*; and here, last night, 67*l.* The box people flock to us; but no pit and gallery. I should think in four years that the theatre will not be opened. It is all over; Colonel Berkeley is the only person that can get them into either, here.

There is nothing but ruin and desolation through this country, with wet; not one day without, since we started.

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Cheltenham, 3rd August, 1828.

We had a "great go" last night—the amateurs and ourselves. Dawkins, *Pangloss;* Colonel, *Dick Dowlas;* I,

* Wotton-under-Edge.—A. M.

Lord Duberley and *Lovel*, in "High Life below Stairs." I never saw a play go off better; and they took to me from the first speech, and roared all through. I was much cheered by the presence of the Rollses, who arrived on Thursday, and have taken a house. We had nearly 120*l.* in the house, a sum only to be produced by the Colonel.

C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Bristol, 18th August 1828.

Your letter of yesterday gave me a pang which you did not anticipate when you wrote it. The sight of another's hand-writing on the direction gave me a notion of the announcement of some unpleasant news; and, until I saw your hand, moved my heart upwards.

We arrived at Wotton on Saturday, and found the Taylors ready to receive us. They did everything to make us comfortable, you may be sure; but, in their anxiety to remember all my peculiarities, like old Mrs. Young, made some blunders. Mrs. Taylor smiled with delight when I refused soup and fish, that she had got something on purpose for me, that she knew I liked—this was a roast leg of mutton! and *not* roast ducks. Taylor would not let me have a glass of Madeira with my dinner. He was sure that I drank nothing but Port; and, not content with his own, which was *only* sixteen years in bottle, but had made interest with old Austin to send a couple of bottles of his old twenty-year Port, assuring him that, at dinner, "I drank nothing but port." After all this kindness, of course I could only steal a glass of claret now and then after dinner.

I am all in a fuss; for they would not hear of our

quitting till to-day. The servant called me yesterday at half-past seven! and to-day we were *obliged* to be up. Oh! oh! Yates desires kind regards.

Affectionately yours,

C. MATHEWS.

The above list of dinner "miseries" is a specimen of what Mr. Mathews often experienced from an over anxiety in his entertainers to please, what they fancied, a fastidious appetite. This mistake originated in his singular simplicity of diet. A promise of a plain dinner was always a temptation to him; because being divested of the usual routine of dishes, it would bring him quickly to his great treat of the day, namely, the *first pinch of snuff*, which he never indulged in until the cheese was removed. Porter was a beverage for which he felt a positive disgust; and it was a favourite joke of Mr. Liston's, whenever they dined together at any house where they had not been in the habit of visiting, to whisper the servants at different periods of the dinner, not only to hand him various side-dishes repeatedly, but to present him with well-frothed glasses of porter or ale; and the contriver so timed these offerings, that the supplies were sure to reach him in the midst of some remarks he was making, or to the interruption of something interesting or amusing that he was relating or listening to. It was laughable to see the gradual surprise and embarrassment, and ultimate

impatience, of the persecuted person at such repeated annoyance, until his eye caught that of his funny tormentor. He then understood the cause of such unwelcome attentions, and his annoyance ceased, as it always did at the detection of any *fun* in his "little brother," as he, on such occasions, called Mr. Liston; whose high spirits, contrasted with his generally pensive habit of mind, were as exuberant as those of a boy, when "i' the vein," and irresistible as his most successful comedy in public.

It was worthy of notice how many instances of accidental detention and other delays of letters affected him through life. He was the most anxious being alive about home, when absent from it; and he suffered intensely on every occasion of doubt. It seemed as if a fatality attended him in this way. It would be curious to reckon the numerous cases of this sort which occurred in his many journeys. The following is one of *dozens*, however, varying only in manner and detail with the circumstances of the time. I really believe such things occurred to tease and agitate him oftener than other people; and, unfortunately, he was so constituted, as not to be able to meet them with indifference, or even composure. He had, indeed, *the agonizing habit of feeling trifles too acutely.*

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Worcester, August 25th, 1828.

I regret very much that I gave you a fidget, as well as myself, yesterday in my letter, but I really could not help it. Hear my story. I was *sure* you would write on Saturday: I got up without being called, because I wished for your letter. No!—Go again: No! Post-office, one from Mr. Price,—theatre—No! The song I expected—I had promised William Crisp, and I wished to take it myself to Malvern, where I had determined to revel in scenery, if a fine day. Gyles and wife arrived here on Friday night, and had agreed to go with me. Well, the disappointment about the letter upset me for the day. I knew the mail would go out before we could get back; I, therefore, after being *almost* satisfied there was not a letter, wrote to you, and ordered it not to be put in the post-office till the last moment; for I said very emphatically, "There is a letter in Worcester for me, if my wife was alive yesterday."

I was engaged to dinner at the house of Dr. Pierrepoint, at six o'clock. On my return from Malvern, I felt, as the time approached, that I *could* not go. I sent Yates on with an excuse, and wandered about with the Gyleses until dark. On my return, I was reposing on the sofa, when in walked the waiter. "A letter for you, sir." The rascally postman had brought it at three o'clock! No comment is necessary—you can guess what I felt.

I said, "Is execution done on Corder?"* before Hook wrote it; but he has managed the palpable quotation with great skill.†

* *Corder*, the murderer of his wife.—A. M.

† *Vide* "Macbeth."—A. M.

Now I have had my hoax I will tell you the truth. The account of dinner at the Taylors was not matter of fact. I *had* beef and claret, and they did everything in their power to make us comfortable. She is a real darling, and he perfect Somersetshire. Such hospitality is never advertized. I saw B.'s letter, and the idea of matter-of-fact people receiving such a one struck me; and it has told right well.*

All goes well here — 90*l.* on Saturday — every seat let for to-night. C. MATHEWS.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

Ross, Sunday, Sept. 2nd, 1828.

To any person who had not such a son as we have I should attempt a description of my rapturous delight, last night, at the receipt of that most welcome frank. If I had not been allowed to open it until to-day, I should have been satisfied that all was right. The Hereford folks benefited by it; it put me into tip-top spirits. The first two persons I saw were Rolls and son! This is a sweet place. We only want you here to make us complete. The boat is announced to take us an excursion on the Wye; so be content with hearing all is well. Our receipts since Tuesday, the 21st, have been 200*l.* clear.

The fairy-glass in Charles's letter is more than beautiful — it is exquisite! and if anything were wanting to make our love for him complete, this must rivet it.

C. MATHEWS.

* A friend had written to Doctor Taylor *à la Liston*, instructing him how to treat his visitor; but the host showed the letter to his guest, and all the intended "fun" was averted.—A. M.

The letter above alluded to, one of a long series equally interesting, I shall stand excused for inserting. Mr. Coleridge happening to be with me when this letter arrived, I read it to him, and he was so pleased that he begged me to lend it to him shortly after, with other letters previously seen on the same subject, as he fancied he could write a poem from them, and should like to try. In a few days he returned the letters, with a note from himself, of which *a mother* may be pardoned for being proud.

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

DEAR MRS. MATHEWS,

It would be profanation even to alter the position of a word in your dear son's sweet letter in the same language, much more to hazard such substitutes as rhyme and verse might require. But even the genius of a Byron could not be better employed than in translating them into a Greek poem. They are poetry of the best kind — imagination — the power of picturesque arrangement and playful will in the service of a pure, most affectionate heart. From my own very heart I congratulate you on such a son.

S. T. COLERIDGE.*

TO MRS. MATHEWS.

MY DEAREST MOTHER, Peroi, July 13th, 1828.

By a turn of fate, I am enjoying myself mightily. Two days after my last letter, I went on a little trip on horse-

* In the course of Mr. Coleridge's correspondence, published soon after his death, he mentions these letters from his friend with high encomium.—A. M.

back with the lawyer of Pola, a young German, to visit the neighbouring villages, and I had a most delightful day. From Pola* we went to the Isle of Olives, not very far distant, where we found the Sclavonian peasants celebrating a festival; and, after taking our share in the dancing and merriment for a couple of hours, we continued our journey to Dignano, a little village, only celebrated from the remarkable dress of the peasants. I was very much pleased with them. The women (amongst whom were some very pretty girls) were dressed exactly in the style of the Venetian ladies of old, as we see them in Canaletti's pictures, and had a most surprising effect as they stood in groups about the town. My new-found friend, seeing me so much delighted with these costumes, proposed extending our ride to Peroi, another small village, five miles distant, and one of the wonders of Istria; being a small colony of Greeks, (consisting of about sixty families, all peasants,) which preserves its original language in the midst of Italians, Istrians, and Sclavonians. I jumped at the proposal, and was amply repaid for my trouble. I never met with anything so elegant and so picturesque as these people; all the girls very handsome, particularly tall and well made, and the men equally so. Their faces are strictly Greek, and their dress quite superb.

I had scarcely entered the place when I determined upon removing there next day, it being only seven miles from Pola; and accordingly, picking out the prettiest house, and that which contained the prettiest girls, I told them my intentions, and gave them reason to expect me. It happened that this family was related to my landlord, Cronopoli, at Pola, who was also a Greek, which gave me great facility in obtaining this favour; for it *is* consi-

* In Istria.—A. M.

dered a great favour, and one never granted to strangers, to take up their abode amongst them.

The day before yesterday I arrived, with all my drawing materials, clothes, &c. and here I am established. On my arrival, I explained that I came to be one of the family, and not to be treated as a *gentleman*; and accordingly I proceeded with them to the fields to help the cutting of the barley; and, to their great delight, dressed myself in their costume, which I did to my own great delight also. In short, I found myself once more, as among the Neapolitan peasantry, happy amidst the innocent simplicity and real enjoyments of unsophisticated nature. The perfect pleasure I felt while dancing, singing, and playing the guitar to these beautiful Greek girls I cannot tell you, enhanced by the feeling that I had already usurped a small nook in their hearts by having thus accommodated myself to their manners. It was quite charming to see them gradually throwing off the reserve of the first day, and beginning to regard me as one of the family. The pride they had in dressing me, and taking me about with them, was great. I had good cause to wear out my legs in dancing with them on the rough stones of the village, for one after another engaged with me till I had gone through the whole string. I then made a sketch of one of them, who had been married about a month, in her bridal dress, a copy of which I gave her.

I am up and out with them in the fields, partaking of their food as well as of their pursuits; the acme of which consists in a couple of hard eggs and a bit of brown bread; not being quite able to accommodate my stomach to their more ordinary fare of bread cooked in oil and vinegar, and dreadfully fat bacon. Fancy me at this moment writing to you, dressed in a white sort of body

and petticoat, richly worked in red, blue, and yellow silk; an embroidered handkerchief on my head, and red stockings, bound with red sashes up to the knee, and sheepskin sandals. I wish Lewis were here to make you a sketch of me.

Peroi is a little paradise. I begin quite to love the people, and fancy myself one of them. I am called by them all "Sukey!" Is not that a sweet name? As spelt and pronounced in England, it is anything but enchanting; but in Greek, as every school-boy will tell you, it means "my soul," and is a term of the greatest affection.

What would I not give if you could possess, through the means of some beneficent fairy, the glass that I have read of in some child's book, in which the possessor could behold, at every moment of the day, the absent person, and contemplate his occupations and situations. The first thing in the morning you would look in the glass (as you no doubt do as it is), and, instead of beholding yourself in a laced nightcap, with sky-blue bandeau, you would see me (but you must get up at three o'clock to do so) sitting on a stone bench, surrounded by half a dozen pretty innocent girls; the one adjusting my head and tying on my worked handkerchief; another lacing my sandals, and all occupied in the decoration of their new-found toy. Near me you would see others, with their beautiful black hair hanging down to their waists, and undergoing the operation of plaiting, till it takes the most beautiful classic form that can be desired. Here and there, at intervals, are three or four fine tall lads, with ample mustachios, trotting to the fields on horseback, with large trusses of straw before them, and saddle-bags hanging on each side, displaying, in their capacious,

gaping mouths, (not the lads, but the saddle-bags,) the store of brown-bread and wine-kegs for their banquet; and a young foal ambling after her aged mother, and now and then seizing her by her swishy tail, and kicking from pure fun and frolic. Then will pass by a little, brown, bare-legged boy, with a large flock of sheep, with here and there a reverend old ram, decorated with bells and red ribbons; a most picturesque group, making dust enough to smother the whole village.

You will gaze for a moment in admiration at the beauty of the lad; his fine Greek face and large intelligent eyes, dressed only in a sheepskin, thrown most gracefully over him, and confined with a crimson sash. A pair of sandals and a slouched hat defending his two extremities, and a double pipe of rough wood resounding through the woods as he saunters after his family. A short time after, you will see the whole village in motion — girls, boys, old men and old women, and myself in the midst of the throng, moving forward in procession; some with pitchers on their heads, some with baskets in their hands, to begin the labour of the day. You will hear, if your ears are good enough, the choruses of villagers, very different from the compositions of Bishop, arranged most harmoniously by themselves, and sung most correctly in parts—the melody some day you will hear imitated by me, as copied exactly from themselves. During the interval of these choruses you will probably—but you must listen well—hear a solo, though of somewhat a more sprightly character, and in a more comprehensible language, in a voice not unfamiliar to you; and at the same time you will observe the pleasure without humbug, and the approbation without flattery, expressed upon the smiling countenances of the rest of the party. An hour or two afterwards you, perhaps, will take

up the glass again—fancy it a looking-glass, and so you can resume the scrutiny many times through the day without much effort—and you will see the party dispersed in various groups over the landscape, and under the shade of some old trees you will see me lying, with a book in my hand, most probably a Byron or a Moore, in the character of an Arcadian, casting occasional affectionate looks towards my darling peasants at their work, and now and then joined by a girl or two from amongst them, who will sit by my side, and pretend to read my book with me, till called by the rest to their work again; and sometimes you will see them depart — don't be scandalised — with their cheeks slightly coloured, lest their companions should have observed the chaste salute as freely received as given. Then, by about the time my father's step announces his approach to the breakfast-room, while waiting for the arrival of his smoking steak, take a glance at me, sitting as one of my smiling circle, with a hard egg in each hand, a small loaf of whiter bread than the rest (baked on purpose for me, and regarded as a *chef d'œuvre* in its kind), on my knees, and a wooden bowl, as white as snow, before me, full of wine and water, to afford a tolerable easy passage to my frugal fare, while my companions, with appetites scarcely credible, dispose of bucketful after bucketful of bread, made into soup by the addition of oil and vinegar, till you begin to doubt whether the feast is performed by elephants or peasants. What would Sir John Carr say to see these girls eat? He who thinks the merrythought of a pigeon too much for a woman, would stare to see a bucket of vinegar, bread, and oil disappear between the rosy lips that he had just been kissing, and see the languishing eyes of a lovely girl throwing aside its jetty fringes to seek the bottom of a three-quart-pitcher, which, "high poised in air," travels from

mouth to mouth, emptied again and again into the elephantine receptacles of these tender maidens, and, like the tower of Pisa, threatening destruction to all around it in its fall. The natural consequence of this light repast, added to the heat of an Istrian sun, is a general inclination to sleep, the girls most modestly seeking some shady spot at a distance, somewhat remote from the male part of the community. Then, for a couple of hours, you may put down your glass, while we give ourselves up to sweet slumbers; first, however, observing me enjoying my privilege as the pet of the party, of lying on the best bit of green, and pillowing my head upon whichever lap I please: a privilege which even the men of the party seem to think it quite right I should enjoy.

We'll say now that it is one o'clock. My father has just started for town, to attend an *eleven* o'clock rehearsal at Drury, and you have just retired to your little boudoir to do a little bit of "reading and writing."—Presently, after a look at the sketch of me by Lewis, you naturally wish for one more glance at your fairy glass—and see me quietly seated, alone, in my little alcove in my Greek cottage, returned from the fields, and occupied with my pen or pencil.

You now begin to think the whole description almost too romantic to be true. You see a Greek gentleman, in a most picturesque costume, sitting on a settee, under an elegant-shaped arcade, with a pipe in his mouth, as serious as can be desired, occupied in serious pursuits with a beautiful boy of five years old standing at the table, with a little white embroidered tunic, confined by a crimson sash, a pair of stockings something like those of Scotland, half way up his little legs, a pair of white sheep-skin sandals, and a scarlet cap with a feather in it, carelessly cocked on his little head, cutting bits of paper into moons and stars,

with a pair of English scissors. You don't know which to look at—you are in love with the child, and yet you cannot help looking at the gentleman. You can't be deceived. In spite of the dress, the mustachios, and the alcove,—in spite of the smell of tobacco, you still discover the features you are in search of. You look over his shoulder, and you see a letter addressed to his dearest beloved mother, and unthinkingly print a kiss upon the glass, which, dimmed by the attempt, hides from you the image you were contemplating; and, as the steam which bathed it gradually [illegible] off again, you fancy you see his eyes wet with the tears of true affection, which, glistening still for a moment, seem to indicate his grief at your deception. But you are not deceived; for, though you cannot see them, believe me, the tears are not a few which, in the midst of all his enjoyments, are sweetly shed at the thought of the affectionate regrets which are ever troubling the bosom of his mother. He sees her at all hours of the day,—he sees his father soothing her sorrow and comforting her with the picture of their son's happiness and well-doing, and reminding her of the unabating love for them both which accompanies him wherever he may be. Though dressed as a Greek, his heart is still English; and all his enjoyments in this enchanting abode are in reference to the delight of talking them over in his own darling cottage, calling to mind the warmth of a southern sun by the side of a coal fire, and finding a pleasure most exquisite in transferring the kisses of his Greek girls to the beloved lips of his mother.

But I have passed the boundary in the twinkling of an eye, and find myself far away from Peroi, and all its romance. The very thought of my own real home has destroyed in a moment the fairy spell of my enchantment, and my marble alcove seems to want a covering of thatch

and a weathercock upon it. My little Spiridion looks up in my face, as if he observed an expression upon it different from the one he is accustomed to, and for a moment leaves his moons and stars, as if to be informed of the cause. Would that I could send the little angel flying to you with my letter, and with the power of conveying on his sweet little lips a portion of the pleasure in description that he and I enjoy together. It is a happiness to look in his little innocent face beaming with affection reflected there from my own, not from *my* little innocent face, but from the fondness which it manifestly shows towards him. I have made a sketch of the little pet, which though it does not do him justice, will convey something of his air.

But I find my journal, which I intended to have served for a week has not even completed a day. My subject is not half exhausted, so that your glass must be used another time to finish the picture. I will leave you now for a while, as I would not have you take a glass too much; as it is, I fear when you get this long sheet, and have to pay its increased postage, you will fancy you see double, though I hope the pleasure of the draught will, in spite of the consequences, induce you to drink again.

With love to my dear, dear father,

Ever your affectionate son,

C. J. Mathews.

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